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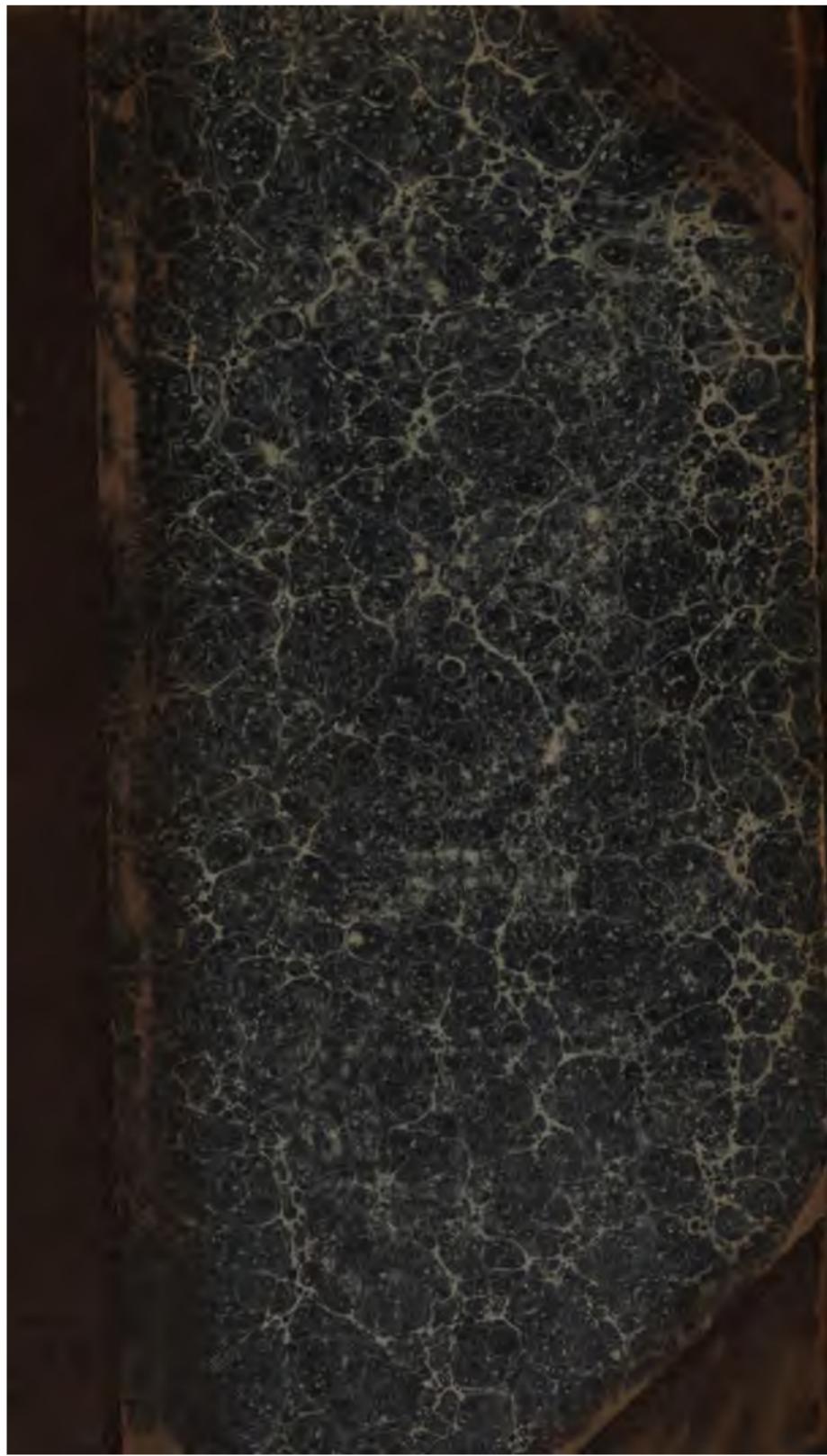
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NATURAL HISTORY

OF

RELIGION,

OR

YOUTH ARMED

AGAINST

INFIDELITY AND RELIGIOUS ERRORS.

BY

THE REV. R. TAYLOR,

CURATE OF HART IN THE COUNTY OF DURHAM,

AND AUTHOR OF

THE KEY TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF NATURE.

LONDON:
BALDWIN AND CRADOCK.

1832.

312. ~~9~~.

“God created man in his own image.” “He hath shewed thee,
O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but
to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” **BIBLE.**
“Be always ready to give an answer to every man that asketh you
a reason of the hope that is in you.” **NEW TESTAMENT.**

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE present little Volume is abridged, in the Colloquial Form, from the MS. of a larger Work, intended to fill two octavo volumes. When the Author had nearly completed his original design, he thought an abridgment might as *conveniently* introduce the subject to public notice. But as the plan is new, and the general view of the subject original, while the arguments in this Edition are necessarily contracted, those who hold opinions herein combat may take the advantage; and if so, the impartial Reader is desired to suspend his judgment until the larger Edition come forth.



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NATURAL HISTORY
OR
RELIGION.

CHAPTER I.

THE DEITY.

“WHAT is Religion?”

The word *Religion* is used to denote our duty towards God and our duty towards our neighbour which include every personal virtue.

“Who is God?”

The infinite, eternal, incomprehensible, all-wise, and all-powerful BEING who created and still preserves all things,—‘In whom we live, and move, and have our being.’

“In what does our duty to this Being consist?”

In acting in obedience to his will, so as to make that will the rule of our lives.

“ How do you know his will ? ”

From the revelation which he has given us of it, as contained in the Holy Scriptures ; and by comparing what is therein contained with what we see and experience.

“ What are the outlines of this will prescribing our duty ? ”

That we should reverence him as our Creator and Preserver ; that we should obey his commands ; that we should strive to gain a knowledge of his attributes, and the relation in which we stand to him, which knowledge is the foundation of our duty.

“ You say that we should reverence God and obey his commands, the dictates of his *will*, and then strive to gain a knowledge of his attributes and the relation in which we stand to him ;—do you mean that we should practise our duty before we know it ? ”

Certainly :—we must first both reverence God and practise obedience to his commands, before we can arrive at any adequate knowledge of his attributes, or comprehend the nature of our relation to him. It is our parents’ duty to imprint these upon our minds, with the earliest impressions thereon made ; no error being more vital in religion, than the notion that children’s minds should not be impressed with the fear of God be-

fore they understand religion. As well might we say that infants should have no food till they understand its nature and use. Death in one case would be certain, and such conduct might be no less fatal in the other.

“ But since this depends upon revelation, how did men act before that revelation was made ? ”

Mankind were never without a revelation. God created the first man perfect in faculties ; and before he acted at all he gave him a revelation both of his own attributes and of man’s relation to him, including his duty. Man transgressed, and changed this primitive relation :—but with this change he received a new revelation,—so that mankind were never without a revelation ; and they do greatly err who say the heathen world have only the light of nature ; or know no more of God than what they obtain from observation. All mankind separated from the family of Noah some few centuries after the Flood ; and wherever they spread themselves over the face of the earth, they carried with them the institution of sacrifice as a type of the atonement, or of some great deliverance from bondage, and a restoration to that happy state from which they always believed themselves to have fallen.

“ Do you mean to say that the heathen world were in possession of the true religion ? ”

Certainly : as all sprang from the patriarch

Noah, their forefathers were such as that patriarch, Job, Abraham, and Melchisedec, as to their knowledge and practice. But since man is a fallen creature, in the stream of time, the true notion of the efficacy of sacrifice, and all the history of the origin of the human race, as contained in the first ten chapters of the Bible, evaporated in a tissue of fables, such as those we find in the mythology of Greece and Rome. No nation is found without a load of superstitious rites, all evidently founded upon the events recorded in the opening of the Bible narrative, so that the origin of all religion was one and the same.

I. "What is Theology?"

A discourse upon the divine attributes, as they are displayed in the works of God.

"What is Divinity?"

A more extensive view of theology, including the light of divine revelation.

1. "What have you to say of Theology as a science?"

Its principles are truth itself. But as men of depraved minds have interested motives and self-willed views to support, they frequently both erroneously and with design misrepresent the divine attributes, and set forth sophisticated conclusions, and still call their lucubrations *Theology*. We

ought therefore to be on our guard when we read a work which claims our perusal by the imposing title of 'A Scientific System of Theology.'

2. "How do you distinguish what you understand by God, from what you mean by Nature?"

As I would the machinist from the engine which he constructs,—only the machinist adapts materials and their attributes to his use; but the Supreme Being first created the materials with their attributes, before he erected the grand machine of nature.

"How do you prove that there is a God?"

From the works of creation: for every individual work bears marks of contrivance. This requires a contriver with intelligence and power. Thus we go back till we arrive at the source of all intelligence and power: and *this*, whatever it is, is what we mean by the word God or Deity.

"Did not the ancient philosophers, called *Materialists*, maintain that *this* Great First Cause unfolded himself into the material universe, and therefore nature is the only Deity, and every part and portion of it, even to stocks and stones, are portions or limbs of the universal God or Divinity, and as such claim divine adoration?"

They did: and of such importance to mankind was the refutation of this pernicious doctrine, that

it forms the very first verse in the Bible, wherein it is said, ‘ In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth ’; meaning thereby, that he first created the matter of which they are composed from *nothing*, or at least without diminution of his divine essence or substance, and therefore he reigns as full and perfect as if these had never been created.

“ But if men still persevere in the belief of this ancient doctrine, has God any where wrought a miracle to convict them of error ? ”

No : God never wrought a miracle to convince an obstinate atheist or infidel. The evidence which he in his infinite wisdom pleased to give, is adapted to the probation to which he subjects mankind, and here rests the matter.

“ What description can you give of the Deity ? ”

To pretend to fully comprehend and describe the Deity, would be equally vain with an attempt to grasp the ball of the earth in the hollow of the hand, or to hide the sun and its light in the apple of the eye. In this case man contents himself with describing what he understands by a few attributes, such as his incomprehensibility, his eternity, spirituality, omnipotence, and so forth. But to attempt to search thoroughly the divine nature, would be like lighting a taper to scrutinize the heavenly bodies.

3. "What do you mean by incomprehensibility?"

By it I allude to the finite nature of man's understanding, so that it cannot comprehend the extent of the divine nature any more than a potter's vessel can contain the waters of the ocean. The wisest man's conceptions of the Deity are as inadequate as those of an earthworm must be to the extent of the solid globe.

4. "What do you mean by eternity?"

When I look at the material objects which compose the universe, they all contain proofs of contrivance. They cannot have existed till after the contriver had existence, and therefore are not eternal. But the Great First Cause could not have arisen from nothing,—for if there had ever been nothing, or a universal blank, it would still have been ; and therefore the Deity is eternal. That our minds are not at ease under the conception of a Being which never had a beginning of existence, is, because we, with *finite* faculties, strain at an *infinite* object.

"How do you distinguish time from eternity?"

Time I would designate as definite and indefinite. By the former I mean that measurable space from the creation of the world. By indefinite, that which commenced with the first act or conception of creation in the Divine mind, and may

continue, including definite or measurable time, till the visible universe is arranged for eternity. But as the Deity and all his immortal creatures will still continue to exist, and as we may conceive the Deity to have existed before he created any thing, this space or portion of his existence is eternity; and may be, nay must be, as much greater than measurable time, as the whole water of the ocean is greater than a single particle.

5. "What do you mean by spirituality, or when you say that God is a spirit?"

I mean that God has not a material body,—limbs or shape, like men and animals,—that matter is no part of God.

"Tell me at once what you mean by spirit?"

When I contemplate man, I perceive that he thinks, reasons, and acts. But then, when I consider what I see of man, I only find it (that is his body) *matter*; and taking this matter *per se*, in the lump, piece by piece, or particle by particle, it differs nothing from the matter of all things around me; and most certainly these, such as stocks and stones, do neither reason nor think. I conclude, therefore, there is a something within man, the source of intelligence and power, which moves this piece of matter composing the human body, and which eludes the strictest scrutiny of my senses; and to this, whatever it be, I give the

name *spirit*. As to the powers or energies of matter, I shall discuss them at large in the following chapter.

"Do you then intend to say that God is such a spirit as animates man?"

By no means. But I give the name Matter to all substances subject to my senses, however they may differ among themselves; and in like manner I give the name *spirit* to all those sources of intelligence and power whose effects I see, whether they animate mere animals or men, as also to the Deity, whose operations I see in the visible world. Nor do I doubt there are as many orders of intelligent beings between man and the source of all intellect, as there are between man and the meanest insect. But this is more a matter of amusing speculation than an article of faith.

6. "What do you mean by the self-existence and self-sufficiency of the Deity?"

I have already stated, that every thing we see bears marks of contrivance, and must have had a contriver. Should we go back, we must come to a cause that never had a contriver, but must have *both its existence and its power to contrive within itself*. Such a cause cannot depend upon any auxiliar cause; for then that cause must be either co-eternal, of prior existence, or of later origin. If it is of later origin, it must have originated from

something else, and therefore implies a prior cause. If co-eternal, then there must be two *wills*, which I shall shortly disprove; and if of previous existence, then it must be that Great First Cause of which we are speaking.

7. "How do you prove God to be omniscient?"

By the same arguments that I prove his omnipotence and his omnipresence. The Deity or Great First Cause is the designer, the contriver, the maker, and upholder of all things. He is therefore, in intelligence and power, present in all his works; and as he is the Author of man's intellect, it were absurd to suppose that he, who contrived such a masterpiece as the human intellect, is not himself infinite and all-perfect in intelligence. Neither is it less absurd to suppose that he has created so much as to overburthen his memory, so as to hold his intelligence and power in abeyance.

8. "When you speak of God's omnipresence or ubiquity, do you mean that he is dwelling every where, and in no place more than he is in our presence?"

By no means: I would rather suppose that all the visible creation is a mere outskirt of his real presence, and that his peculiar mansion is far removed from mortal ken. But still, as all these have existence *in* and *through* his power and wis-

dom, his power and intelligence must be present with them, seeing they are as much depending upon him as the leaves growing upon a tree are on that tree; and therefore, though my intellect, mind, or soul, is no part or portion of the divine essence, yet he is as intimately acquainted with it, and as much present therein, as if it was really his own substance. As I said before,—I do not bear the same relation to him as a machine to its maker, nor as a child to its father,—the relation and dependence are much more intimate. In making a machine, man adapts existing powers to use; and offspring depends little on man's controlling will. But God's *will*, creating and controlling power, are all in all.

9. "How do you prove that there is but one God?"

From the unity of design every-where present. Every thing in nature is as perfectly a part of one great whole, as if the globe of the earth was suspended by a chain from the sun, and that thing a link in the chain. No place has been found either manifesting a proof of deficiency of his presence, or of his acting by different counsels in his procedure. The proof is equally every where present, that the whole process of nature depends upon one moving power acting from the centre. There is no double, no resisting, nor controlling process nor power. There is no opposing, nor

double nor divided *will*,—no proof whatever of the fulfilling of more than one *will*, and that one free and independent, and therefore there is but one Godhead or Deity.

10. “What do you understand by Omnipotence?”

I have already shewn that all things must have proceeded from the will of *one* Great First Cause, that all are supported by him. It must, therefore, follow that all power dwells in him: for whatever power exists in the effect, must have existed in the cause. Nor can it be supposed that the Deity imparted a greater power than he possessed himself, or that he imparted power to such a number of beings that the aggregate should be beyond his own perfect control. So far from that, all power without intermission is upheld by him and altogether depends upon him. There is nothing in man which we can compare to the creative power of the Deity. Since if man give power to any thing, as in machinery, it is only an application of existing power, as that of gravitation, the expansive force of heat, the elasticity of matter, or muscular contraction. In this respect, as in most others, man has nothing of his own: God is all in all.

11. “How do you vindicate the divine claim to infinite or perfect wisdom, since we see so much

confusion in the moral and political world ; and since you say man is the workmanship of God, and yet is frequently in misery ? ”

By the perfection of planetary motion, the power of gravitation, and the various operations of nature, I vindicate it in the material world. And when I speak of the perfection of his works, in the next chapter, I shall establish it in the animal creation. I shall prove man a fallen creature, and shew that what we call confusion in the moral and political world, and consequently human misery, are all parts of one great state of probation for a higher scene of existence ; and which, when properly understood, are no more imperfections than the imbecility of infancy is an imperfection of mankind.

II. “ What do you mean by the essential and moral attributes of God ? ”

The essential are such as those already mentioned, the moral are such as follow :—immutability, happiness, goodness, justice, and the like.

12. “ What do you mean by the divine immutability ? ”

Such is the wisdom and perfection of the divine procedure, that he changeth not, either in his essential or moral attributes. His righteousness, truth, and goodness, shall endure for ever. He is not like man, to revise his ways or improve his

works on more mature reflection or on second thoughts.

“ But how do you vindicate such expressions in scripture, as ‘the Lord repented him of the evil he thought to bring upon such or such a person or nation,’ and his granting requests in prayer ? ”

Both cases are one and the same. Human feelings are often ascribed to the Godhead, but this only in compliance with human prejudice. As to his apparent change of purpose in answer to prayer,—the change is in the suppliant and not in God. By prayer, if it be real, the sinner repents and becomes a different creature ; and thus changes the relation between him and his Maker. The prayer then is granted, and the immutability of the Deity is still perfect.

13. “ How do you prove that the Supreme Being is infinitely happy ? ”

From his being in the possession of the constituents of happiness to a perfect and infinite degree.

“ What are these ? ”

They may be distinguished by active and passive. The latter are the enjoyment of every wish, or perfect contentment, and freedom from all quietude, internal and external : the active are known by the term Goodness.

" How do you maintain that the Deity has no internal nor external inquietude, since it is supposed that not only wicked men, but superior beings, even rebellious angels, are in arms against him ? "

Of this we are assured, that God reigns in heaven; laughs them to scorn, and holds them in derision. So far from being a cause of disquietude, both wicked men and angels, as to his great plan, work his will. They are the necessary instruments of man's probation, and in the end will perfect that plan ; and will then be as evidently necessary to its completion as any other part.

14. " What do you mean by the Goodness of the Deity ? "

By goodness is generally meant benevolence and doing good to others. The divine goodness may be thus propounded. A time has been presumed when the divine essence alone existed. The material universe and its living creatures are willed into existence. What were these living creatures intended to do ? or what was his view in creating them ? They each received existence ; —and this must be either pleasurable, painful, or indifferent. If indifferent, there appears to be no adequate motive for the divine exertion. If painful, then injustice and malevolence must have been the inducement. From this, Dr. Paley in his Theo-

logy has abundantly vindicated the divine goodness. He has sufficiently proved that the imparting of pleasure or happiness was the divine motive, and that his benevolence has not been abortive. If man is sometimes miserable, it is only a temporary preparation for infinite felicity. If a chief part of happiness therefore consists in goodness, what an infinite source there must be in the Deity, who created all to enjoyment, and who is continually imparting pleasure to his creatures. He must be infinitely happy.

15. "How do you vindicate the infinite justice of the Deity?"

This, I conceive, is already done by shewing that he created all things to enjoyment and not to pain, nor a state of indifference. If man is sometimes miserable by the injustice of others, which we might say God should instantly punish, we should speak unadvisedly, not remembering that this world is a state of probation, and the next the state of rewards and punishment.

"But has not God the right to inflict arbitrary pain upon man or beast?"

Certainly *not*:—if he did so, he would be *unjust*. For to be just, is to act according to what is commanded. God's own moral perfections are as much a law to him as any commanded law;

and in this sense he has not the right (for so we are accustomed to speak) to act contrary to them. According to human language, he has not the power to act contrary to the perfection of his own nature.

“ Can you vindicate the Divine Wisdom and Goodness in creating man with the power of making himself miserable, which some compare to putting a sword into the hands of a madman ? ”

Most certainly I can. Perhaps no idiot ever made himself miserable, or wilfully inflicted pain on himself. Men of the greatest abilities are not the least apt by misconduct to bring misery on themselves. Temperance and intemperance are as unerringly rewarded and punished in this world, as religion and wickedness will be in the next. As to the various degrees of mental energy and corporal vigour, and the different conditions of life, they are all but very short or momentary preludes to a drama of infinitely more endurance, action, and pathos : and therefore, could we but have a glance of the perfect plan, they would appear to be, as they really are, of less importance than the mere act of putting on our clothing for an ordinary day.

16. “ What is Truth ? ”

The agreement between words and things, or the sign and thing professed to be signified.

“ How does Truth apply to the Deity ; or how do you shew it to be a divine attribute ? ”

In various ways. *First*, the question has been agitated, whether the visible world is a true index of the divine mind, or whether the Deity has not exhibited in it delusive appearances ;—and, *secondly*, whether he was honest enough to make man’s senses so as to give him right notions of sensible or material things,—to see them, for instance, as they are.

“ And how do you prove that he has ? ”

By that perfect agreement which there is among all mankind as to the appearance of things ; and the harmony among these things themselves, so that we see no strife in nature causing at any time even the least momentary suspension of its process. If there was such a lie in men’s faculties, they could not exist, at least as social creatures. God, therefore, is not only true in all his ways, but is Truth itself—inasmuch as he is all in all.

17. “ How do you vindicate the divine Mercy ? ”

First, by shewing that God is so infinitely above man, as to be perfectly free from such imbecility as vindictiveness. And, *secondly*, by shewing that when he is called a God of vengeance, it is not more than a compliance with human prejudice, insomuch that all this is only the natural result of sin, which draws its punishment after it, as invariably as a

substance its shadow. But we are chiefly indebted to revelation for our knowledge of this amiable attribute. Therein we find that God's apparently most weighty and severe dispensations are only the more intense mercies in disguise. In the pardoning of sin and the receiving of man into favour, we are justified through 'the Lord our righteousness,' without whom we could not have been justified before God: that is, without the Mediator, neither his justice, truth, nor mercy could have triumphed.

18. "What do you mean by the immensity of the Deity?"

That his essence, by which I mean all I can set forth as his attributes, is in extent far beyond all imaginable bounds. 'There is no end of his greatness.'

"How would you attempt to enlarge the notion you have of the extent or magnitude of the Deity?"

I would consider *first* the extent of our globe, the number of its inhabitants, which is computed at more than eight hundred millions of human beings; while the animals, sea and land, are millions of millions without end. Of mankind, not less than three thousand quit the scene every hour, and a greater number are born; while of the animal creation millions receive existence and re-

sign it every moment. And we are assured this has continued thousands of years and may continue thousands more. Then the planets, and even the sun itself, which is a million times larger than our globe, are all as well adapted to animal life, and are no doubt as thickly stored with their various inhabitants. Farther still—the fixed stars are found to be of the same nature as our sun, and doubtless have planets revolving round them. The stars we see are only a few stragglers of a great shoal or cluster, which compose the *milky way*, consisting of millions upon millions, equal in size to our sun in splendour; and some at least a hundred times larger than our sun. But this cluster is only one of many such clusters, which are, from certain telescopic indications, supposed to stock the boundless expanse of the skies, stretching one beyond another without end. Such is the extent of creation, that were our sun, with our globe and the other planets, annihilated, it would have less effect upon the whole, than the depriving a forest of one single leaf. By these millions of millions of worlds, each containing its millions of millions of inhabitants, all created and upheld by that one Great First Cause, called the Deity, I would enlarge my conception of the magnitude of that Being, who, although his power and wisdom are such as to be adequate to all this on the large scale, is yet so perfect in these on the small, that a sparrow may not fall to the ground without his

knowledge ; and the life, comforts, and even beauty, of the meanest insect are as much his care, as if that insect alone had all his attention.

“ You seem so anxious to fill the womb of space so full of planetary systems, worlds, and their inhabitants, as if you would from the universe exclude all possibility of a throne of God ; and what is understood by heaven and hell, if not somewhere among your clusters ? ”

By no means. All these, as already said, may be but the waste places of his domains. The place where his immediate honour dwelleth may be far beyond these, and no doubt is in proportion. For, if his power is such as to create and uphold all these, his mansion must bear some adequate relation thereto : it must infinitely exceed all these both in extent and glory. And I count all those men, who say they will not believe in the existence of a heaven and hell because they cannot see them, as little short of irrational creatures.

19. “ What do you mean by the personality of the Deity ? ”

That which can contrive and execute I call a person. The seat of intellect is the person. This attribute in the Deity I call personality.

“ Do you suppose, then, that there is but one mind in the Deity, which, if so, must be equally

capable of attending to millions without end of things and processes at one and the same moment of time, even from the projectile of a comet to the muscular motions of an insect, and the lighting up of a sun to the beautifying of a butterfly's wing,—and that he does all this without the aid of minor agencies?"

Certainly I do. God may have many hierarchies between himself and man, and each individual of them may be active in his proper sphere; but their aid is not needed as auxiliary in the great process of nature.

"What idea, from the consideration of the personality of the Deity, and the constitution of the divine mind, as reflected from the works of nature, have you of the final arrangement of his great plan for eternity, with respect to the different degrees of felicity his blessed creatures shall enjoy?"

The noblest specimen of frame work we have, is that of the sun at the centre of the system. And I conceive the noblest idea we can form of any such arrangement, must be something in the manner of planets encircling the sun. The happiest creatures, on this supposition, will, by their intrinsic worth, gravitate or approach nearest his person, or what we may call the centre of his glory;—'the bosom of the Father.' And all other degrees find space and their respective stations, till the most worthless and refuse, like chaff or spume,

float at the greatest distance in outer darkness. This may be thought to be contradicted by what is said in Scripture of the heavenly paradise; but if what is here advanced be the mere conjecture of science, we are to remember that revelation is always clothed in images adapted to human prejudices. But all we are in reality concerned about is, the certainty of a future state; and in this, science and revelation join hand in hand.

20. "What do you mean by the perfection of the Deity?"

The concentrated reflection of all his attributes, which is not so visible when we examine them one by one; for this is like dissecting an animal to examine each limb separately. But if this perfection reflected from all his works so abounds in the effects, it must be equally exuberant in the cause. If we call it perfection to be without fault, then the Deity is perfect in every sense in which we can view him; or, he is perfection itself—and all the perfection in created things is only his shadow or reflected image.

21. "What do you mean by the Holiness of the Deity?"

Holiness, as applied to the Deity, is that attribute which signifies the perfect freedom of his essence from corruption and unsoundness of parts; and therefore he is infinitely holy. Man's body is

the reverse. It contains within it the seeds of corruption. It must be dissolved. But this mortal will put on immortality. The seed however of this change must be sown *here* in holiness of life; and then, hereafter all the corruption or unholiness of God's accepted will be purged out from the eternal presence, and they will be, through the divine agency of the Mediator, as if it had never been. While those who refused to be cleansed will be expelled beyond the present glory of the Deity, and may take their stations in outer darkness, as naturally as foam rises to the surface of an agitated stream.

CHAPTER II.

THE CREATION.

1. “What is natural philosophy?”

Natural philosophy has for its object, causes and effects, and the laws of nature. Its province is substance or matter and its attributes ; and in its researches, whether in chemistry, manual experiment, or observation in natural history, it looks through nature up to nature’s God.

“How do you distinguish between natural philosophy and the abstract sciences?”

These are busied in language, arithmetic, geometry, algebra, and so forth : being such as depend upon memory and thought—upon reasons and their conclusions.

“In what age of the world did natural philosophy originate?”

Its principles must have employed the reasoning faculties of mankind from the very creation. The vain cosmogonies of the heathen world were the produce of its speculations upon the religious creed. But their theology soon left both nature and reason behind, and became a tissue of absurdities. And no truth is more certain than this,

—that errors in religion are inimical to natural truth, insomuch that the philosophy of the heathens was as absurd as their theology.

“ But were all the heathen world in this darkness of natural science ?”

A few highly talented individuals, such as Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero, had a glimpse of the true light of nature ; and spoke of the attributes of a Great First Cause, maintaining that virtue and vice were a something more than the will of a number of imaginary deities, whose personal example with respect to morality, would have been a disgrace to human nature. But still, if they saw the absurdity of the popular creed, their theology was so interwoven with all their notions of the energies of nature, that it was beyond both their power and their daring to separate the one from the other.

“ What effect had the doctrine of these great men on succeeding ages with respect to the progress of natural science ?”

The dogmas of Aristotle bound it in fetters of adamant ; which were not broken till our immortal countrymen burst them asunder ; and it is remarkable that the fetters at the same time fell from true religion.

“ Who were the regenerators of this science ?”

Bacon shewed that common sense and experience must be the basis of all science. Newton demonstrated the mechanical laws of matter on the large scale on mathematical principles. Boyle led the way by chemical experiment to the true knowledge of nature in her elementary operations. Locke rescued mental philosophy from the trashy science of ontology. These, as stars of the first magnitude, along with others of various splendour, form a bright constellation in our hemisphere, and they were no less brilliant for their stedfast faith in the true religion.

“ Since you say the heathen philosophy and theology were inseparably blended together, they must have had some features common to both as the bond of union—which do you consider the most prominent ?”

Belief in a future state of rewards and punishments ; than which nothing could be more firmly relied on by all the various tribes and nations of mankind, wherever dispersed over the face of the whole earth.

“ What advantage in a religious point of view do you expect from the rapid progress of natural philosophy ?”

That it will every day add strength to the evidence of the revelation of the Bible, being no other than the will of Him who is the Author of nature ;

and that nature itself is nothing else than the first act of a great drama, which will hereafter be completed on a more extensive and enduring stage.

2. "For what purpose do you suppose the material universe created?"

This is an extensive question: but when I maturely consider it, I cannot suppose for any other purpose than that which revelation declares—that it is a stage erected for the preparation of man for a future existence of much higher action and pathos.

"What leads you to form this conclusion?"

First. The Bible, in speaking of the creation of man, expressly says that God created him in his own image and similitude: And, *secondly*, since man was, as I may say, made in imitation of God, I infer that this world may be in the same degree a *fac simile* of the next; and I come the more readily to this conclusion, since I find all the parts and portions of this visible universe copies of each other, which I call the analogies of nature.

"Point out a few of the most striking analogies; and in the first place speak of man the image of his Creator."

It was a notion we received from the heathen world, that man consists of two parts, the *animus* and the *anima*, or the rational and animal.

The former they supposed would re-live in a future state; the latter, which he was said to have in common with the brute creation, was supposed to be wholly of this world, and to which all the animal propensities belonged—and thus man was a kind of beast with a superadded rational soul.

“And what is your opinion on this subject?”

I agree with Bishop Butler that matter is no more a portion of the *person* or *self* than the telescope by the help of which I view a distant object; or than a wooden leg is part of a wounded man. As we are *here* placed in a material world, we have material bodies as *media* between *ourselves* and this world. Should the next world be material, though glorified, we shall again possibly be indebted to it, for a portion of glorified matter as a connective medium. Nor will our passions, which we sometimes call animal propensities, be left behind. They are attributes of the soul—though with a wrong direction. They glide rapidly in an improper channel. It is our duty *here* to stem their current, and turn the unwilling stream in the right direction. Death will be a kind of second birth. At our first birth, latent faculties were brought into activity, and improve during our stay here, so long as the material media are in tolerably good repair. At our second birth these faculties will undergo, in the mode and intensity of activity, as great a change as at the first birth; and

as the next life is eternal with perfect media, they will for ever improve.

“ But can you not draw a closer parallel between man and his Creator ? ”

This analogy consists chiefly in the rational part of man or the soul ; and for the consideration of which I set apart the following chapter.

“ What analogies do you point out in the material world ? ”

The science of electro-chemistry teaches us, that there are the same energies of attraction and repulsion in a mere atom, that exist in a world.—The selfsame powers are exerted in every particle of this ink, which compress, impel, attract, and propel the planets round the sun ; and even poise the sun himself and all the planets and their satellites in one common centre of gravity. It also shews that the absolute mathematical contact of two atoms is as impossible as the rushing together of two planets ; and that the distance at which each sphere is stationed from the sun, or a secondary from its primary, is in the exact ratio to the mass with that of two elementary particles, though the latter are too diminutive for mortal eye to discover space between them ; and the former are so large and distant, that the gigantic mind of a Newton was necessary to comprehend and reveal their connection and mutual dependence.

"What analogies can you point out in the vegetable kingdom?"

As might have been expected, it displays in very legible characters that peculiar style or mannerism which pervades the whole of the divine works; and that not only as compared with animal life, but with man as the creature of time and eternity. For as a grain of seed arrives at maturity, and then is committed to the earth, and rises again with increased produce, and by succession of crops may be increased and multiplied to infinity; so the soul of man, matured in virtue, quits its earthly support and rises to a life where its virtues and intellectual faculties will shoot up with fresh and increasing vigour; ascending through one degree of glorious excellence to another through all eternity. Still approaching in likeness to Him, the fountain of all glory and excellence, without a possibility of appearing otherwise in the comparison, than as a drop of water to the mighty ocean, or as a particle of light to its parent luminary in the skies.

"Is the style or mannerism of the divine workmanship visible in any other respect in the vegetable kingdom?"

Yes: it is strongly marked in the germination of plants, and the resurrection of man from the grave. The germinating process is carried on

beneath the surface of the soil; and is similar to the life of man extended from this world into the next. While the plumula is yet beneath the surface of the soil, the warmth of the sun nourishes it, though no light penetrates. It sees not the face of the cheering sun, or at least beholds it very dimly as its head approaches the bourn which ushers it into day and gives it to the smiles of its great regenerator, where in due course of time it blooms in full perfection before his approving countenance. So is it with the soul of man. The eternal spirit of the Sun of righteousness, with its genial fostering warmth, broods over it, and reduces the chaos of rebellious appetites into obedience to a better principle: so that the nearer a good man approaches the grave of a mature age, the more warm and invigorating is this heavenly influence; till, like the half-coloured plant yet pent up in the ground, some good men have beamed with heavenly dispositions before they had fairly quitted this earthly scene.

“Do you suppose that as God created this world from nothing, he will annihilate its substance and create a new one for man’s future abode?”

As to this world being changed so as to form the material substance of our future state, I see no obstacle in the nature of its ingredients. For the

most splendid and costly gems, differ nothing in their elementary principles from the rudest and most unsightly stocks and stones. But at the same time, such is the fulness of Omnipotence, that he has no need of the substance of this world; or, he may cause it to assume whatever state he pleases.—But I would rather leave these unprofitable conjectures, and shew, since I consider this world a nursery for man, how well adapted to that purpose it is, both as it respects his accommodation and his discipline for the future state.

3. “Are you aware that there have always been men in the world who maintain, that what you are pleased to call the attributes of the rational soul, are the mere result of a peculiar organization?”

I am well aware of it, and can very easily shew its absurdity. Matter, by which I mean the substance of which every thing is made, distinguishable, by visibility, extension, and weight, has none of the properties ascribed to life. For in all the torturings, compositions and decompositions of matter or substances, in their search for the philosopher’s stone or the universal *panacea*, these same persons never once saw the appearance of either an animal or vegetable production. All matter can do, or all man can do with it, is limited to crystallization. This abundantly proves that the mere energies of matter are distinct from both animal and vegetable life:—and if so, certainly much more from rational life. So that we may

safely conclude against all the arguments of a vain and unprincipled philosophy, whose object is to subvert all that is truly valuable among mankind, that there is nothing in mere matter, which can cause it to assume any other form than those we see in stones, minerals, crystallized substances, or such as were not elaborated into their present structure by vegetable or animal life.

“ Since man is a mere nursling here, and is soon transplanted to a higher existence, can you tell how he is linked to this abode ? ”

To explain this link would be to shew how he is nourished ; but before I approach the immediate point of contact between life and matter, I would shew how matter is prepared and fitted for entering the animal system.

4. “ You would give me to understand that the Architect of man’s frame, like all other architects, first makes a peculiar preparation of materials ? ”

Certainly : and this laboratory is the vegetable kingdom. But to shew how this is effected would exceed my limits *. Suffice it to say that when the materials are prepared, they are supplied with their full energies ; and that the vegetable and animal life reciprocally depend upon each other. All the operations caused by the mere energies of matter, as well as the effect of animal life upon matter, are to cause them to emit a definite pro-

* See larger edition, and Key to the Knowledge of Nature.

portion of their energetic principles, which, escaping, produce light and heat. But the functions of vegetable life have a directly contrary effect: they, by the decomposition of light and heat, re-charge the original particles of matter with their respective energy; and thus, the one doing what the other undoes, proves them distinct in nature.

5. "How then do the particles of matter enter the animal system so as to form the bond of union between the immortal soul of man and this material world?"

Every one must be convinced that he cannot remain more than a few moments without breathing; and his existence, he is sensible, somehow, equally depends upon a constant supply of food. But the stomach and its auxiliary organs are fitted for taking in a supply which will maintain life, in cases of emergency, for days; while of the air we breathe, being a substance very highly rarified, our lungs can only hold a momentary supply.

"How is the vital heat supplied?"

Those not yet acquainted with this subject, may perhaps be a little surprised, when they are told that the process of life within them, so far as it is connected with matter, is precisely the same as the burning of a common fire. We place the fuel, be it wood or coal, within the grate, and ignite it;

—which suppose equal to the birth of man. This fuel is the same to the fire as the food to man. The particles of matter in the fuel have their full energies. They combine with particles which compose the atmospheric air and which are also in the same state. These charges of the energetic principles combine to form light and heat; and the material particles form water and carbonic acid invisibly dispersed. Here then we have the fuel or food of the fire, and the oxygen chemically combining; and it is well known that should the fuel be spent or the air be excluded, the fire is instantly extinguished. It is precisely so with man: only in case of the fire, the combination is much more rapid, so that the energetic principles are discharged in such quantities as to cause intense heat, and consequently visible light; while in man it is so slow as to produce a mere warmth, without any visible light.

“ Is this heat generated in the stomach ? ”

No: the food is first prepared by digestion in the stomach; and after quitting this chemical laboratory, the finer parts are strained off, by the lacteals, and enter the blood. By the circulation they are brought in contact with the air in the lungs. They are then dispersed over all the body to repair and build up all the wasted places. The particles used for increasing the bulk of the body, are all disposed in the places assigned them by

Infinite Wisdom, so as to supply the nerves, strengthen the muscles and sinews, or increase the size of the ligaments and bones; while nature, acting the part of a thrifty housewife, when she has more food than her present needs require, disposes it in cells provided for that purpose, under the name of *fat*; and which she again brings into use, should there ever be a lack of fuel for the vital fire.

“Has the will of man any thing to do with the disposition of these particles?”

No. Man is in a very small degree acquainted with his own nature. He is manifestly the object of an agency that acts behind the scenes; who, infinite in intelligence and power, leaves man in utter ignorance of the very first principles of his nature; and altogether devoid of power over those principles upon which his existence depends: as if the Supreme Being had designed this ignorance to be a constant admonition to humility.

6. “What name do you give to the connection between the immortal part of man and matter?”

Life, animal life, animality or animalization.

“In what part of the body is the chief seat of life, or where is the immediate point of contact?”

It is in the blood: for by the office of the blood, in its circulation, the vital lamp is always kept burning; but the result of our inquiry will be,

that the animal heat is the process of vitality, without which the soul would instantly quit this mortal frame.

“Do you suppose then that heat is the real essence of this animal life?”

No: what we understand by sensible heat may only be an effect. But then, this effect may also be an essential cause. No process of combustion can proceed without the materials being at a sufficiently high temperature; and this temperature is nearly ten times that of animal heat. Yet, as a certain degree of heat is necessary for vitality, the animal life supplies the place of the higher temperature. In this respect, the process is very near to that of fermentation. There are proper vessels disposed in every part of the body to absorb and carry off the effete particles.

“Why is the heart called the seat of life?”

Because it is, as it were, the head quarters of the blood. By its muscular expansion and contraction, it first admits the blood with the new supply of alimentary particles from the stomach, mixes them in its internal cavities, sends them to the lungs to receive vital air; then takes them back again, and propels them along the arteries to all parts of the body.

“Where do you suppose the chief seat of the soul to be, if not in the heart?”

The chief seat of vitality as well as of the intellect is undoubtedly in the brain and nervous system. In short there is good reason to consider the brain and nervous system a kind of *electric battery*, or what philosophers call a *dry pile**; and every pulsation, a discharge of the electric fluid. These discharges cause the evolution of heat, the vital fire; and the source of this is the food and vital air taken in at the lungs. At every pulsation, therefore, a chemical combination of particles takes place, and water and carbonic acid are evolved as in the combustion of oil in a lamp.

“But if vitality is thus carried on, how do you develope the source of animal motion?”

It is on the same principle. Every exertion of a limb depends on the contraction of a set of muscles; and as the more we exert our limbs the greater the heat; so there is every reason to conclude that electric discharges in like manner take place in the exertion necessary for animal motion. The torpedo and some other animals have an evident but curiously contrived electric apparatus, which they can charge and discharge at will, as an engine of attack and defence.

7. “But do you not think that this electric pile of the brain considerably simplifies the process of vitality, and would almost induce one to believe

* See the Cabinet Cyclopædia, Herschel's Discourse on Natural Philosophy, p. 343.

that man in the end may prove but a mere organization of matter?"

By no means. The more we unveil the secrets of nature, the more do we wonder at the power and wisdom, and admire the skill of the Great Contriver! The nerves are the channels of the mind to all the muscles of the body. But still, all this amounts to no more than the mere turnpikes and vehicles of conveyance to a civilized country. What or where would these roads and these carriages be without man, their great contriver, and the one that uses them? And what is all the contrivance in the human body if the immortal spirit be absent? Death, which is but another word for this absence, instantly deletes them all. And what a scene of activity there must be in this soul to do all this; to keep all the muscles of the body in action when needed, even should the means be no other than what is here surmised—the developement of the electric fluids! And what a deliverance it must be to the soul, to be freed from this burden of the flesh! And what a host of abilities both for intellecction and action, may there not be in the soul for a higher scene of future existence, should we therein have a body not needing such constant attention and exertion!

"Are you aware that there is a certain set of men calling themselves philosophers, who maintain that the superiority of man over the brute is owing to a better organization of the brain?"

Yes: I know this well, and am fully prepared to refute the assertion as the offspring of dishonest presumption. No man can believe it for a moment, much less dare to venture his eternal all upon it. Neither have any maintained such opinions who had not by their pride of heart and intellect hardened themselves in daring impiety against the all-seeing providence of God, and who like a stag at bay set themselves, even against hope, in stern defiance of his retributive justice.

"But what can you say of the organization of the brain?"

With respect to the substance of the brain, it consists of a pound or two of a pulpy watery matter, which fills the upper part of the head, and sends off strings of the same material to different parts of the body. This substance, from its consistency, its composition, its organization, and appearance in whatever light viewed, is as unlikely to produce thought as any other kind of matter.

"But do not phrenologists maintain that it is divided into a number of compartments called organs? What say you upon the subject?"

Phrenology I consider in two lights. *First.* David Hume, the sceptic or infidel, affirmed man to be a bundle of ideas, that there is no such thing in man as an immortal spirit. His followers eagerly seized upon the supposed fact of there

being these organic compartments in the brain ; and maintained that the mind of man is a compound of a certain number of organs, the seat of different faculties. As, *first*, in the forehead the rational faculties ; *secondly*, in the upper and middle part of the head the sentiments ; and *thirdly*, in the hinder and lower part the animal propensities.— All these are somehow, like Hume's bundle of ideas, jumbled or combined together to make that *rational, feeling, and world-enjoying creature*, called man !

“ What say *you* of phrenology ? ”

I consider the body as, all in all, an instrument of the soul ; and whatever part I view, I find evidence of nothing else than instrumentality. The brain is a part of the body, and as I have said, is apparently the immediate residence of the soul. That its organization should be curious and inexplicable is to be expected. But from this to argue that it is, by its organization, the source of thought and will, is too absurd to mention.

“ Then you reject phrenology *in toto* ? ”

By no means. As I shall afterwards shew :— there are various instincts or attributes in the soul. In different individuals certain of these are more active than in others ; which is equivalent to saying that the soul of one man is more on the alert to one individual enjoyment than the soul of another is to that enjoyment. But it is well known that

mechanics have stronger or more sinewy arms than the mere student, the washerwoman larger hands than the lady. Such being the case, there seems to be no reason why the soul which throws the weight of its will into the balance of intellectual enjoyments, and another which is ever indulging in mere feelings, while a third is all for animal enjoyments, should not exercise almost exclusively different portions of the brain. And, if so, undoubtedly the part of the brain the most used will be the largest; for it is always found, the more intense or active the thought, the more rapidly the blood flows through the head; and, in the whole, four times as much blood circulates through the brain, in comparison of its weight, as through the rest of the body. On this principle, therefore, the more any faculty, sentiment, or propensity is exercised, the more powerful must it become.

“ But have you not in this granted all the phrenologist asks ? ”

Perhaps all some of them ask ; but certainly not what those of the Hume school ask. For *they*, placing the power in matter, say the large organ gives the superior ability, more intense feeling or headlong propensity : *I*, on the contrary, that the soul enlarges its instrument ; for as the greater rush of blood is to any part, the more is that part enlarged, at least during the earlier years of a man’s life ; and thus the brain, as a lobster en-

larges its shell, elaborates the extent of the cranium according to its own bulk. In this case the shape of the head may be an indication of the bent of the soul; and thus far all anatomists and phrenologists agree.

8. "Have you not heard of philosophers searching in the brain for traces of the objects of memory: as if they supposed images or pictures were engraven on the substance of the brain?"

Materialism involves its votaries in a labyrinth of absurdities. The manner, in which the mind recalls past events, has been to them an endless source of vexation. Should gross materialism be maintained, they are under the necessity of shewing that such pictures must exist in the substance; but on examination there are no more indications of them in a philosopher's brains than in those of a calf. Another absurdity was, that all our thoughts are mere excrescences from the divine mind: a device by which they fancied they had got rid of human responsibility.

9. "What inference do you draw from all this care and pains of the Deity in fitting means to ends, and so adapting man to this world; when at the same time he is so short-lived and so imperfect in his moral conduct, as to shew he does not answer to so much preparation?"

I conclude that this stage of our existence is but

a mere prelude to one in which man, made in the image and after the likeness of his Creator, will be exalted many degrees in the infinitude of that chain, which connects the Creator with the meanest of his works. When instead of this earthly unwieldy body, he shall have a body all perfect and glorious, with faculties so enlarged as to fully comprehend, as regards his own infinitely happy existence, the whole will and purpose of God.

“ What have you to say of the creation, viewed as a specimen of the Great Architect’s skill and wisdom ? ”

Viewing it as a whole, I conceive it to be perfect; and hence I form the most exalted ideas of the infinite perfection of the Creator.

“ How do you prove the perfection of this superstructure, the material universe ? ”

Because I perceive every individual part to be as much dependent on, or connected with each other, as the wheels of a machine. Cut off one part, the connection with the motive power, and the effect of the whole ceases. All must move or stand, or, stand and fall together. Alter or annihilate one part in the great machine of nature, and universal destruction would be the result.

1st. To begin with the superior and descend. The least variation in the attraction of gravitation might change the bed of the ocean on our planet;

and what is now dry land would be submerged beneath the ocean : a burning heat, a benumbing cold, an extended rain, or a total want of it, might bring universal ruin on the present race of man. Had any one part of what is now called the great chain of cause and effect in nature been otherwise, unless all parts had equally corresponded to it, all would have been inefficient, or the result would have been different from the present.

2dly. All the parts of the mineral kingdom perform their office so well, that they seem, as to their peculiar properties, adjusted with the utmost precision. The least change in the attraction of one element might be destruction to the present arrangement of the whole.

3dly. Then the vegetable kingdom, viewed as a large manufactory for the wants of the animal, is perfect, as to its specific purpose, in every point of view, whether in utility or beauty. And in its dependence, is equally adjusted to the mineral as the animal to it. They are as a chain of so many links.

4thly. But the animal kingdom, as composed of various tribes, has no less a mutual dependence on each other. Genus links into genus, and man is a link co-extensive with the whole chain of the various tribes. They live upon each other as their apportioned food, from the largest beasts of prey downward to the mere insect ; and from the shark and whale to the microscopic medusæ ; one link

of which chain being broken, the whole might be destroyed. But man, the lord of the creation, eats every thing that is eaten by any other animal: they all form for him, the great omnivorous animal, one great table !

“ But has not the world been characterized as one great promiscuous slaughter-house ? ”

That one tribe of animals is the peculiar food of another is most true ; and so far it is a slaughter-house. But it is not true that it is a promiscuous slaughter-house. No animal, man excepted, preys promiscuously on all. Each tribe has its proper food; and in this respect the peculiar wants, nay, even comforts of each, both individually, and collectively as a genus, are attended to as sedulously as if it was the sole care of the Great Parent of all.

“ Are you aware that there are philosophers who maintain that all animals have a tendency to superfecundity ; and that even man himself is always treading upon the heels of support ? In other words,—that the Great Architect is not that perfect arithmetician which you suppose ? ”

As to the various tribes of animals this may be easily disproved. And as to man, it has never come to a trial. As yet, the world has never been stocked with above one thousandth part of the human inhabitants which it would support, were all its surface as highly cultivated as some parts of

Great Britain. And till this is the case, till mankind are multiplied a thousand fold, we have no right to impugn the Divine Wisdom in his workmanship. That many of the human race die of want, is owing to the ignorant selfishness of rulers, combined with the want of industry and prudence of the sufferers.

10. "What have you to say of the beauty of the divine workmanship?"

First, That beauty is not either a comparative term, nor a factitious circumstance; but is a real attribute in the Deity, slight shadows of which are seen in his works. That as man was made to admire and adore the Divinity, the external appearance of that which commands his admiration, we call *Beauty*. When we perceive beauty in the works of creation, it is this attribute of the soul recognizing the beauty of the Creator reflected in his works.

"Whence arises the converse of beauty; or, since all is the work of the Deity, how happens there to be deformity or ugliness?"

Most of what we see in this world is subservient to something else. The crystallizations in the mineral kingdom are decomposed for the support of the vegetable. Then again the vegetable kingdom is the food of the animal; and what is not fit for them, is decomposed for manures. Hence the

products of nature, as they come from the hand of their Creator, may be compared to the rich viands of a table furnished for a feast; but what we call deformity, is, as when the guests have well played their parts, and fragments alone remain of what was before so beautiful. That the reverse of beauty is sometimes to be met with in the human face, is to be ascribed to that internal depravity, the sad consequence of man's fallen state.

“ How do you discriminate between natural and artificial beauty ? ”

Artificial beauty is the mere imitation of nature; by the skilful arrangement of selected fragments or specimens of natural beauty.

11. “ What conclusion do you draw from a contemplation of the universe ? ”

That it is the reflected image of the Divine mind; and gives me the most exalted idea of his power, wisdom, goodness, perfection, and beauty—that it must have been undertaken for some adequate purpose, which is, I have every reason to believe, that man might in it be fitted for a still higher scene of existence; and, finally, when I compare it with the most highly finished works of man, or man himself with the Supreme Architect—I find both man and his boasted works of art, worse than nothing, and vanity !

CHAPTER III.

THE HUMAN SOUL.

“ What is the science called which treats of the attributes of the soul ? ”

Mental philosophy—sometimes metaphysics.

1. “ What is your idea of metaphysics ? ”

Metaphysics was once a term used for certain pursuits which men gave themselves up to in searching after the attributes of the Deity, and the nature of the human soul. They pored over these till they were addle-headed ; and imagined they dignified their lucubrations, by this high sounding term. It was therefore supposed to mean something very deep and learned, beyond the grasp of common minds. In plain terms, it was a cloak for ignorance. But as soon as it was thus established, designing men, who wished to be free from the trammels of the responsibility in a judgement to come, seized upon it ; led their followers into a chaos of difficulties, chiefly of their own creation ; persuaded them every thing was doubtful and uncertain ; and that nothing could be relied upon as matter of faith ; and then, without shewing them how, they emerged from the chaos, with atheistical assertions as principles of science. Hence, meta-

physics is at best but a suspicious term ; and your true metaphysician is one who wilfully involves truth in obscurity. He, in short, generally speaking, is what the arch-fiend is, when he assumes the semblance of an angel of light.

" What do you consider as the strong hold of the metaphysician ? "

The origin of thought or ideas in the mind ; and language, or the signs by which we communicate our thoughts to each other.

" How does he find his account in these ? "

By his peculiar art, reasoning men out of the belief in an *immortal spirit* ; next in order, by shewing that *thought* can be nothing more than something of a chance medley of dreams ; and then, of course, that *words* can be nothing more than conventional signs ; and having thus far succeeded, he is then ready to prove that in reality a spirit and a broomstick may be one and the same thing ; for neither have any real existence out of the imagination.

2. " Under how many heads do you intend to consider the human soul ? "

1. I shall consider its destinies. 2. Its capacities. 3. Its instincts or propelling powers. 4. Intellect. 5. Knowledge. 6. Reason. 7. Will.
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“ What do you mean by the destinies of the soul ? ”

That man commences or receives his being in this world ; but that this is only the mere incipient stage of his existence ; that he is intended in the divine purpose to inhabit a future world of infinitely greater perfection, where his faculties will be greatly expanded, and where he shall enjoy a happy eternity. These I call the destinies of the soul.

“ How are you assured of this ? ”

From the utter dread every one feels of annihilation and oblivion ; from the general consent of mankind ; but chiefly from the sacred writings : for to bring life and immortality to light, and to teach men how to fit themselves for the enjoyment of them, are the end and design, the sum and substance, of the divine revelation.

3. “ What view do you take of the capacities of the soul ? ”

I consider the human faculties, in this stage of existence, as but the germs of what they will be in the future state, where there will be no instrumentality. Man shall dwell in the presence of God ; or so in his immediate glory, that it shall be his light as the sun is now by day. All the energies which are now employed in this highly complicated

machine, the living human being, will be all at liberty to aid in intellectual pursuits, in the service of the present Creator: when the reasonableness will be self-evident, and hope will be swallowed up in fruition. And such is the infinitude of the Deity, that we need not fear our pleasures in beholding, or our faculties in enjoying, will ever be satiated. The capacities of the soul are its powers of enjoying such glory.

“ How do you enlarge your knowledge of these capacities from revelation ? ”

Besides what I observe in the instrumentality of man, and the perfect adaptation of it to this world, revelation tells me that man was made in the image of God; and since God is a spirit, I perceive that in man’s rational part must this image consist. Hence I examine the energies of the soul, and find each one, though man is a fallen creature, to be an image of the divine attributes.

“ Define what you mean by the energies of the soul ? ”

I mean, chiefly, those energies which impel to active exertion, whether intellectual, or mere corporeal gratification. For I maintain that the lowest animal pleasures, however mean and grovelling, are as perfectly acts of the soul as the most exalted contemplations.

" How then do you account for so much ignorance and misdirection of aim in man's pursuit of happiness ? "

By his being *here* in an instrumental state, and his being a fallen creature. By the one, he is in a state of faith and hope;—by the other, these energies, which are the germs of those faculties that will expand in the future state to an infinity of enjoyment, feel here a capacity for such enjoyment. But then, the soul being so fallen, is so blinded that it thinks each enjoyment is to be found in the things of this world. Hence, losing faith and hope, in its real home, it drops the reins of continence; and these capacities, as ardent desires, urge it to pursue, here, what is only to be found in the future state.

" But these are extreme cases, how do they more generally act ? "

They are the source of all man's activity, the mainspring of all his actions.

4. " How do you distinguish these capacities and energies ? "

I propose to consider them chiefly under instinct and intellect.

" What do you mean by *instinct* ?

Such actions in man as do not arise from *will*

directed by forethought and reason. It is instinct which directs the brute creation.

"Can you further define instinct in man?"

It is the propelling power not belonging to the will as guided by thought; and therefore is something independent of his rational and personal act and deed. And as the most important office is committed to it—that of preserving the existence, when there is neither power of exerting the will, as when asleep, nor opportunity, as in cases of sudden danger—it is clearly demonstrable how much the power of instinct is superior to the boasted power or light of reason.

"What do you infer from this *instinct*?"

That there is a great deal behind the scene of which we have no knowledge: that the soul either has vast energies not yet subject to our scrutiny and control; or, that every contraction of a muscle, or at least every passion urging man on almost in defiance of himself, must be the immediate work of the Deity, and therefore a miracle. But the text which says, that "God created man in his own image,"—affirms that man is a little deity with self-existent energies of will; though they are not at present objects of his knowledge; and that he has capacities for a much higher destiny when the veil of the flesh shall be removed,

and all the powers of the soul shall be auxiliary to the intellect.

“ You say that God created man in his own image, how do you parallel instinct with the divine attributes ? ”

Instinct I consider as the effect of the love of existence. Now, we are unaccustomed to say that God loves his own existence and desires a continuation of it. But should we for a moment invert the position, the absurdity will be evident. God, therefore, we are justified in saying, *wills*, *desires*, and *loves* his own existence and happiness. This done, I at once parallel the first law of nature, self-preservation and freedom from pain, (that is pleasure) with the divine attributes.

“ Which attribute do you first instance ? ”

The desire of a happy existence ; and it is an attribute in man—the essential principle of action. It can no more be separated from the human soul than man can divide himself. But the Deity has his existence and felicity from himself : man from the Deity. In the future state man’s happiness will greatly arise from the presence of the Deity, the source of his existence and felicity. The means of life are, in this world of instrumentality, what the divine presence will be in the next. The soul, though by revelation man is commanded to raise

his thoughts above these earthly things, in its fallen and blinded state, places those affections on the means of life and its enjoyments, which will hereafter be fixed on the present Deity.

“ How do you parallel the attributes *unity*, supremacy, self-existence, and omnipotence ? ”

As I said of all the divine attributes, God loves and desires the continuation of them, and man affects the possession of them. But in this fallen state these attributes of the soul are the sources of pride, self-will, love of praise, unwillingness to submit to all constituted authority, which is often rendered harsh from these same principles in the rulers ; and that evident desire in man of setting up himself as God, and his tyranny in exacting the obedience and adoration of his fellow creatures.

“ What say you of omniscience ? ”

That it is an attribute in human nature more universally affected than any other. For there is no man living, who does not flatter himself that in some things he is more wise than the rest of mankind. This is the great source of vanity and folly, ill attempts at wit, and what makes men the laughing-stock of each other. For within this little circle, *self*, every man is more supreme than Alexander himself, when he had conquered the world, and not less ambitious of divine honours.

“ God claims the homage of all his creatures ? ”

And man is ever desirous of the applause of his fellows. There is not a more powerful stimulant to exertion, nor a greater paraliser, even to the most depraved, than the censure and detestation of mankind.

“ God is the Creator and Possessor, or Lord of all ? ”

And man has no greater pleasure than that of creating a fortune, inventing something great or useful, cultivating the earth, whose produce is to the cultivator a kind of new creation, multiplying his own image ; and the love of possession is too evident to need mention.

“ Can you parallel the social disposition in man ? ”

Man in his social disposition has the greatest satisfaction in the company of those he has benefited. And the Deity is social, since we suppose he finds pleasure from the presence of his happy creatures, who are happy by his beneficence.

“ Parallel the divine happiness.”

I do it in that insatiable thirst for happiness or pleasure, which urges the human race.

“ What is hope ? ”

It is parallel with prescience in the Deity. It is a presentiment in the soul of future glory, and

which, being an essential attribute, can never be separated from the soul; for should it be cured of its blind gropings *here*, it breaks forth with tenfold intensity in the true region beyond the grave.

“What says religion to these instincts?”

It teaches us by the management of the reason and will to regulate them. For to pretend to annihilate them or to change their nature is downright absurdity. We might as well speak of first destroying the soul in order to a new creation. Religion is to them, what a guide is to a blind man in a strange country.

“What have you to say of God the judge of all?”

This attribute in man is conscience as regards himself; and his internal approbation or disapprobation of virtue or vice in the conduct of others.

“There is another instinctive attribute I shall mention—*imitation*.”

We perhaps may not say that God has the attribute imitation: yet that he created man in his own image and similitude would perhaps bear us out. God here imitated himself, and if man is, as Paley characterizes him, ‘a bundle of habits,’ then we may say he is every moment imitating himself.

5. "How do you distinguish intellect, knowledge, reason, and will?"

Intellect is the active principle of the soul by which man understands, or has knowledge of his relative condition to all around; *will*, that by which he acts; *knowledge* chiefly rests on memory; and *reason* is the power by which he regulates the exertions of the will proceeding to action.

"What do you mean by the word power which mental philosophers dwell so much upon?"

It is that portion of self-existence which the Deity has imparted to man, so that he is a little deity:—to a certain degree a self-sufficient being, insomuch that he can will and act. It is his personality. It is that which must for ever extinguish all pretensions about life being the result of organization.

"What do you mean by mind?"

The whole business of the soul in this world is by instrumentality; and it may therefore not unaptly be compared to a mechanic employed in his shop, with all his tools and materials about him. The materials are to the workman what knowledge is to the intellect. Mind, then, is the intellect busy with the materials—its knowledge.

"What have you to say of the senses?"

They are the intellect extended so as to form

the communication with the external world. They are the inlets of knowledge.

“ What relation does knowledge bear to the intellect ? ”

The same as light to the eye. Without light the eye were useless : and the more knowledge the more powerful the intellect ; for without knowledge there could be no reason.

“ What aid does the intellect afford of contemplating itself ? ”

None at all. As the eye can only see straight forward, and not back into itself, so also the intellect cannot turn inward and view itself. Man is truly said to be a being darkly wise. He is, as to the extent of his knowledge, and the manner in which he knows, as a beam of light escaping from a puncture in a dark lantern. He is sensible of a great deal going on within him, of which he knows nothing. Even the chief machinery of his existence proceeds equally well when he is asleep.

“ As you have shewn the analogy between the great propelling powers in the human soul called instinct, and the divine attributes, can you point out any analogy in the intellectual ? ”

Yes : I would instance four. 1. The perception of truth. 2. The love of truth. 3. An assent to it, when perceived ; and 4. A power of recalling the perceptions of it, or memory.

“ What is truth ? ”

The representation of things as they are. The basis of truth is, the Deity himself, his works, their relation to himself and to each other. The divine works, as viewed by their Creator, reflect his own perfections. And as God must love and desire his own perfections and that all his works and their relation to each other appear as they are in reality, we therefore say, to love and desire truth is a divine attribute; as also to hate the contrary, or falsehood. And as man is after the divine image and similitude, he must love truth and desire the knowledge of it. These are essential and equally instinctive and intellectual attributes ; as also to abhor falsehood.

“ What do you mean by the perception of truth ? ”

Common sense, which is the tribunal of truth, or the eye of the intellect. This is sometimes called intuition ; and is that by which the soul distinguishes objects, as a stone and a piece of bread.

“ But since you say that common sense is the standard of truth, how comes there to be so much error ? ”

Could the intellect always perceive all the intervening links between cause and effect, if it could at one glance tell the sum total of a column of

figures in a ledger, as readily as the sum of two and two, there would be comparatively little error in the world.

“What do you mean by the love of truth?”

That pleasure which every one has from the perception of truth; but which is placed in stronger light when contrasted with the displeasure of being deceived.

“What do you mean by an assent to the truth?”

That acquiescence which we perceive when common sense has decided. But since all our commerce with this world is by instrumentality, and we see the instrument alone, life is chiefly carried on by our reliance upon the veracity of others. It is the love of truth, therefore, in ourselves that induces us to believe another will not deceive us. And therefore, *this*, like all the attributes, is essential to our existence. For without trust in each other we could not exist a moment. When extended to the objects of religion we call it *Faith*.

6. “How do you define memory?”

It is the power the soul has of using at will its stores of knowledge; and this is done by having some kindred idea presented which acts as a key note. Hence a man of great memory is generally a man of great knowledge. For when any object of knowledge is presented, he has an extensive

light in which to view it; while the one of bad memory sees, as it were, in twilight.

“What is your inference from memory, or the power of recalling past thoughts?”

That all our thoughts are somehow registered in the soul, or may be, as it were, the elementary particles of its composition; and that when we are in the light of the divine glory in the future state, the soul may appear such a compound medley as our thoughts have been through life. Virtue and vice, then, will need no other judge or condemnation than *self*. And here may be the foundation for the healing powers of the Great Physician of souls.

“What do you consider the chief point of mental philosophy?”

The origin of thought or ideas. This is the *experimentum crucis*—the wall of partition between the metaphysical infidel and the true philosopher.

“How do you account for the origin of thought?”

I conceive sensation to be the intellect in action; that there is no mind till there is sensation, which is the first rousing of the soul to recognition, and this recognition is mind. These first sensations may be previous to birth; and if so, a child may be born with ideas, but these are not what are meant by *innate* ideas.

“ What are innate ideas ? ”

A supposed knowledge imparted to the soul with life by the Creator : as if real knowledge, as well as a capacity for it, was an attribute of the soul. There are no *innate ideas*.

“ How then do ideas originate, or how does the mind acquire knowledge ? ”

The senses are as it were the intellect in the search of, or in the act of groping about for, the knowledge of external objects. They carry their information to the *sensorium*. The intellect is employed upon them, and the result, as laid up in the memory, is an idea. All the ideas we receive are portions of truth. But as all truth may be considered as one great whole, inferior in extent only to its Author, every idea or portion of truth must be a speck or particle of this whole. When the senses therefore convey a particle to the great sensorium, it is by the intellect assorted to what has before been obtained, so that the portion is by so much enlarged, the particle is joined and made one indistinguishable piece with the rest. But very often, as our condition is instrumental, a great many of our ideas are only probabilities. These the intellect associates, and originates fresh probabilities as conclusions. This process is termed *association*.

“ What do you mean by the imagination ? ”

It is nearly identical with association; but it brings into activity the instinctive attribute, *the creative energy*. The soul has a capacity for an eternal weight of glory. It is ever discontented with the things of this present world. By the instinct, *hope*, it searches for that glory *here*. The intellect therefore collects what it deems the most glorious in this present scene; associates such ideas, and creates a heaven of its own, making itself the god of this ideal heaven. Hence to the wrong-directed instincts, works of fiction or imagination must ever be more pleasing than those of mere truth, because the latter are occupied solely with things of this world, facts and realities, for we know little of the next: the materials of the former are also of this world,—but then they excite the instinct hope, and every moment we seem on the point of catching a glimpse of some glory commensurate with the capacities of the soul, which glory, however, is only to be found in the future state. But still, as the love of truth is an attribute of the soul, these works of imagination must every moment flash with truth or probable truth, or the mind would turn from them in disgust.

“ But is there no other knowledge than what is a part of the great whole the substance of all truth?”

Yes:—such as language or signs and things

signified, which is called *conventional*,—another species may be designated *rational* truth, which is the inference drawn from premises.

“What notion have you of the manner in which the soul perceives external objects?”

The ancient philosophers had various devices for getting rid of this difficulty. The two chief were,—1st, that the soul darted forth and grasped or fathomed these objects; 2d, that pictures, phantasms, or ideas (which originally mean images or pictures) were continually flying off from external objects and entering the recesses of the soul or mind. The true notion must be sought for in that perfect adaptation of man’s faculties to the material world, so that all are, as it were, links of one great chain. One God made all, and light and the eye may be considered as one entire piece of workmanship; and so of all the rest. It is the intellectual soul acting behind the scenes. In this, as said before, man is a being darkly wise.

7. “What is reason?”

I shall the more clearly explain by a short recapitulation. *Intellect* and *will* form the self-acting principle or personality of the soul. The attributes, or modes of acting of the intellect, the guide of the will, are—1. *Perception*, being the impression on the senses, sometimes called the recognition of sensation; but only so when the

senses are considered as something essentially different from the soul. 2. *Memory*, by which the intellect retains the perception, and can recal it on the presentation of a kindred one. 3. *Common sense*, having as its basis an intuitive perception of truth, as being the reflection of the divine perfections. It is that, therefore, by which the intellect decides on truth, and stores each decision in the memory as so many precedents with which it compares future perceptions. 4. *Abstraction*, by which, when a perception is presented, it selects the right precedent with which to compare it. 5. The act of perceiving and comparing it is called *apprehension*; and when new ideas are formed it is *conception*, and in the largest extent *imagination*. 6. Every decision at the tribunal of common sense becomes a principle of knowledge, which may be called the furniture of the intellect. And when the intellect avails itself of these, which are to it what light is to the eye, it is said to *comprehend* or *understand*; and therefore the *understanding* is the intellect acting with all its acquired knowledge. 7. Every decision made by common sense, after due comparison, is an act of *judgment*. 8. And as every distinct action of the man requires many acts of judgment, the process or the power by which it is carried on, is called *reason*. *Reason*, then, is the full and perfect operation of all the mental and intellectual powers. It is the controller of instinct and the guide of the will.

"What do you mean by the word *prejudice*, which cuts so great a figure in mental philosophy?"

The false impressions which the mind is apt to receive from its being in this stage of existence, in a state of instrumentality: as when it conceives of the sun that it is no larger than a circular plate of hot iron; and the false notions, received from the erroneous views of others, which chiefly have their origin in that sad depravity of the human heart occasioned by the fall.

"But might not these prejudices be avoided, if sufficient care were taken of the education of children?"

If we had preceptors of perfect wisdom we perhaps might avoid a great many, but not all. But where shall we find such? Perfection is not the lot of man. If we cannot, however, avoid a whole thousand prejudices, we may perhaps diminish the number by a few hundreds; and this ought to encourage us in the work of education, both in the choice of preceptors and in the work itself. But since these prejudices are the rules of conduct, and the principles which influence the judgment, and reason is nothing more than a collection of acts of the judgement, we have small cause to hold up the pretended perfection or infallibility of reason, and to worship her as a goddess.

"How do you prove the truth of Lord Bacon's aphorism, that 'knowledge is power?'"

By shewing that he who has the most extensive knowledge of cause and effect; of signs and things signified, of the humours and dispositions of mankind, and the history of the human race, can so order his plans as to prevail over his opponents not possessed of these advantages. The Deity in this sense, may be said to be almighty because he is perfect in wisdom.

"What do you mean by *fortune*, *chance*, or *luck*?"

Independent of an overruling providence and fixed laws, they are words used as the mere cloak for ignorance. The cast of a die, which we are accustomed to say, is directed by *chance*; or, more properly speaking, falls without any direction, appears to be entirely dependent upon fixed laws. But such is the narrowness of the wisest man's intellect, that even in so very trivial a thing as the cast of a die, he is completely in the dark. He cannot trace it through the most obvious laws of nature, nor clearly see one of the connexions between the different parts of the process. It is only in things on a larger scale, and with a few steps, that his boasted reason is of avail; although he is sometimes arrogant enough to pretend to trace with the same almost rayless intellect the *rationale* of the almighty procedure; and being

therein quite as much in the dark, will presume to tax it as imperfect, merely because incomprehensible! He might, with a greater appearance of justice, rate the divine wisdom in making his intellect so contracted, and like the vessel to the potter say—‘why hast thou made me so?’ But this he will not do; for, acting on the presumption that he is somewhat of a deity himself, that is, a self-sufficient, self-existent, and certainly a self-loving *being*, in his pride he dares to bid the Almighty bow, and vindicate his own divine works and procedure.

“What would be the result could a man see with a perfect vision through nature up to nature’s God?”

Nothing is more sure than that man’s intellect, under the present dispensation, will ever be very limited; and that his knowledge must ever be but in part. It is vain to inquire what would be the result were any man’s wisdom as great as we may conceive it to be. Were it such, that, as it were, with a divine ray he could see through nature, and distinctly perceive all the capabilities of material things, as regards their particular uses to the benefit of the human race; we must suppose that he would see so much of the divine purpose, that nothing but what tends to man’s eternal salvation would attract his attention. His wisdom would be rather directed to teach mankind to despise the

world, than to invent things to rivet their attention the more to it. Instead of improving the condition of the human race in this stage of existence, he most probably would rather aim at making it worse, that man might be the more compelled to turn his views to the next. Had the Redeemer taught how to make this world a more near resemblance of Paradise, by developing some hidden principle of nature, he would in the same degree have disparaged the glories of eternity.

8. "What is *will*?"

It is what every one knows, but what no one has ever yet defined with success. It is the power of the soul which acts. It is the controller of instinct. In act it is called *volition*. It is the self-existent, self-sufficient power in man vouchsafed by his Creator, so that each man is to a certain degree a little god. He thus has *imperium in imperio*. But for the exercise of which he is responsible, inasmuch as every act of the will affects the soul, which being of eternal duration, and the condition of that duration being according to the aggregate of the individual acts of will through life, we say every man is responsible for each and every act of will.

"How do you distinguish between will and desire?"

The latter is instinct urging to enjoyment, as

already stated. But then instinct or desire always furnishes the object of the will, without which will were nothing ; and even both together, without reason to point the way, would be like blind Samson groping in vain for the pillars of the House of Dagon.

“ In what does freedom of will or free agency consist ? ”

In the power man has of controlling the urgency to action of the instincts, foregoing a present gratification for one of more pleasure at a future period.

“ Can you not define freedom of will more closely ? ”

It is a subject often involved in great obscurity, but yet is capable of elucidation. Before, however, I can accurately define it, you will give me leave to ascertain what is meant by freedom of will. And in order to do this, let it first be determined how far and in what sense any agent, even the Supreme Being, may be said to be free. If free agency can any where be found, it certainly must be in the Almighty ; for whatever he wills is done. His will and power are co-equal, and are properly identical. He is omnipotent, and his wisdom is the sum total of all perfection. This at once precludes the possibility of his willing any thing which may not be done, or is not the

best as tending to the consummation of perfection ; so that here is absolute freedom of the will. And as man is in the image and similitude of his Creator, he also has the same finite likeness in the freedom of his will. But this image and similitude will not be perfect till man is in his eternal state ; and then his wisdom, though finite, will be perfect according to that state ; and he then shall *will* nothing but what is best as tending to the consummation of his eternal happiness. If his reason here were perfect, it would so regulate his will, that no volition would be otherwise than the best, and therefore his will would be available and perfectly free.

“ If the matter is so plain, how comes there to be so much contention about free-agency ? ”

Self-interested views are generally at the root of all errors in religion. When men wish to involve the subject in mystery, they begin by absurdly asking if God could will such things as are in reality contrary to his nature, which are tantamount with impossibilities ; and which being answered in the negative, they then say, without borrowing much from metaphysics, that he is under a fixed fate or absolute necessity. And this being conceded or assumed, the senseless doctrine of absolute necessitarianism follows as a matter of course. But check them at this point, and there is no foundation for any such doctrine.

CHAPTER IV.

MAN A FALLEN CREATURE.

1. "WHAT is the grand difficulty in religion ; the pivot on which true and false religion turn ?"

To UNGOD SELF. In other words, utter prostration of *self*, in the sight of God : the sacrifice to God of the heart with the affections and lusts. This is the rock of offence, the stumbling-block, the *experimentum crucis*. To avoid this, this ungrateful self-annihilation, is the root of all false religion by whatever name called.

"But if the task is so ungrateful, why not desist from religion altogether, rather than load ourselves with the burthensome rites of false religion ?"

Because the awful sense of a Supreme Being, to whom we owe allegiance, is an attribute of the soul, which cannot be shaken off any more than a man can divide himself; and therefore the wider men deviate from the true religion, the more uneasy and superstitious they become. The infidel, who pretends to throw aside all religion, cannot for a moment have his mind at peace. Hell is within him, blowing up his wrath against God, and its foam is continually boiling over, and bespattering all within his reach of a contrary opinion.

“ What do you mean by Natural Religion ? ”

Natural religion is the true religion, since one God is equally the Author of nature and of divine revelation. But since men of depraved hearts have had many devices for quelling their fears of a Creator, to whom they are responsible in a judgment to come, they have affirmed that the works of God speak a different language from his revealed word ; and this distorted language they have called the religion of nature, or natural religion.

“ What is the chief feature in this religion of nature ? ”

1. The deification of human nature, the setting up human reason as something of divine perfection ; and the rejecting all belief in a superintending providence. 2. The disbelief in a future state, whereby they attempt to rid their minds of that uneasiness arising from the reflection of having to answer for their sins at the tribunal of their Creator.

“ What name do they impose upon this device ? ”

They pretend to acknowledge a great First Cause, and therefore they call it *Deism*, and themselves *Deists*. But as they maintain that there is no God, who watches over us with an unceasing providence and recognition of all human motives and actions, the true name must be *Atheism*.

"How and when did this originate?"

It is a consequence of the *Fall* of Man. It originated with Cain and his posterity in the old world. And with Ham and his race immediately after the Deluge, and has had its seat in human depravity ever since.

"Do you suppose it will ever become general?"

If we can for a moment suppose God to cease to be omnipotent, it may: not otherwise. It is the work of the devil, which God permits for the purpose of trying men's dispositions, and thoroughly searching their hearts. It is the touchstone of faith and submission to God. But its bounds are accurately defined. God has his hook in the nose and his bridle in the mouth of this great Leviathan; and every inch of rein is carefully measured out by infinite Wisdom.

"What are the principles of natural religion properly so called, or that part of religion deducible from nature?"

The analogy between man and his Creator already mentioned; and that perfect adaptation of man to the present scene, wherein all his *natural* and moral qualities are to his continuance in this life, what his religious are to his well-being in the next.

"Instance some points."

Self-preservation is a dictate of nature; which

if a man does not obey, he may instantly perish ; for to avoid danger is written on the human soul, and as the soul is the work of God, so to avoid danger is as much the command of God, as if it was every moment proclaimed in thunder from heaven. The same may be said of the pain of hunger, which in reality is the voice of the Deity, commanding us to take food : as also of every other pain or uneasiness, which urges us to use our endeavours to get rid of it. Man's natural life, therefore, is a scheme of rewards and punishments ; for pleasure or release from pain, is the reward for obeying the dictates of nature ; and pain is the contrary.

“ What have you to say of the mental or rational part of man ? ”

That infancy is a learning of things necessary for the well-being of youth : youth bears the same relation to manhood ; and every part of life is the counterpart of another ; insomuch that a man slipped into the world with full and mature faculties, would be in danger of perishing, before he learned how to use the things necessary to his existence.

“ How do you join natural and revealed religion ? ”

As every part of this life is a preparation for another, as a perverse and disobedient youth brings on an intemperate and wicked manhood, ruined

constitution and premature death ; and on the contrary, virtuous youth is succeeded by flourishing manhood, health, and honourable old age ; so is *this* life, taken as a whole, the prelude to the enjoyment or otherwise of the *next*. This is natural religion rightly considered.

“ What is your inference from a general survey of the moral nature of man ? ”

That the indulgence in pleasure is so inevitably followed by pain, and the wholesome restraint laid upon our desires for gratification so invariably succeeded by lasting peace and satisfaction, and every part of life so evidently a scheme of rewards and punishments, and every effect depending upon causes, of which very often we can catch but the merest glimpse ; that this present scene of things can be but a mere outside, the springs or moving powers are all behind the scenes, and that this world at best is but a mere prelude to a drama of infinitely more action and pathos.

“ And what says the votary of natural religion falsely so called to all this ? ”

That this world is a very good one, would men but content themselves with it ; that every man is the artificer of his own fortune, and need never want but through his own sluggishness and mismanagement. And what is this but *self*-deification ; wiping off at one sweep all the hopes of

many a poor helpless mortal, born, in this world, to no other inheritance than poverty, disease, misery, and utter slavery to the capricious will of others, in many instances greatly his inferiors in point of intellect.

“Have you any other sect or party who advocate the light of nature and the perfectibility of human reason?”

Yes, there are others who say a great deal about these, who do not absolutely deny the immortality of the soul, but who nevertheless will not *ungod self*. They would go to heaven, but in their own way. They would hold a divided empire with God as a matter of inherent right. Their most distinguishing tenets are a denial of the fallen nature of man, and the reality of sin. They call themselves UNITARIANS; their chief tenets form the subject of the present chapter.

2. “How do you define *good* and *evil*? ”

Natural good is that which conduces to the well-being of mankind, both individually and in society: and *natural* evil the contrary. *Moral* good is what is done in obedience to the known will of God, speaking by revelation or through nature, in the voice of reason: moral evil is what contradicts this known will of God.

“What is *good*? ”

It is God. He is the Creator and the Supporter of all. He is Life and all in all ; in him we live, and move, and have our being. He is therefore the substance of all good, the Supreme good and goodness itself.

"How do you account for the origin of evil?"

In the first chapter I attempted to body forth an idea of the immensity of the Deity, by a survey of the material universe ; and when I consider the immense chasm between man and the Creator in all the attributes, I find reason to conclude that there may be beings between man and the Creator, as much excelling man in faculties and capacities as man excels the meanest insect. In Scripture, we read of thronedoms and principalities ; of the angelic hosts. And St. Jude speaks of the angels which 'kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation.' And our Saviour says of the devil, 'he was a liar and murderer from the beginning,' or before the foundation of this world. The inference from such premises, is, that these heavenly hosts not only existed, but had their day of probation, as man now has his, before the creation of this world, and perhaps before the existence of this material universe. Some stood, some fell. Those who fell are permitted a well defined extent of power in their naughtiness, and for a certain period. The Almighty uses them in his infinite wisdom as an instrument with which to sift and try

the hearts of mankind, to excite them to display the latent self-will stubbornness and depravity, that in the end, when this world's affairs shall be wound up, all may stand self-accused and self-convicted before the eternal Judge, when a due distinction in sin will be made between what a man has committed purely from his own depravity, and what he was irresistibly excited to by the devil.

“Can you more accurately define evil?”

It is the fruit of the devil's wickedness, whereby he instigated man to disobey God, and thus forfeit his perfection and happiness. Man's trial was henceforth in the fruits of his disobedience, namely, a diseased body, annoyed by the elements of heaven, and subject to toil and want. These along with the divine displeasure, the sad fruits of his sins, form the sum total of all evil. Evil, then, when accurately defined, is neither more nor less than the confusion introduced among the divine works by the *free-will* of God's own creatures, being exercised in opposition to God's own will; which confusion is temporary, and will hereafter be as completely composed, and its effects remedied, as if it had never existed.

“Whence do you derive the knowledge of the origin of evil?”

Not solely from the Bible. Wherever the human race has been found, the notion of an adverse

power, by whose insidious agency man fell from innocence and happiness, has been preserved. How they came by this, will afterwards appear.

“ You say the fallen angels are permitted as instruments to try mankind, how do they do this ? ”

By a secret agency in that wide and extensive portion of man’s nature unknown to himself.

“ What do you suppose to be the extent of their power ? ”

An urgency to enjoyment, by exciting the instincts, so as to obscure the light of reason, and bias the will. But so in the regular course of nature that no one perceives it to be the incitement of a foreign agency. Every one when so tempted imputes it to the warmth and urgency of his own imagination and desire. Yet murderers have frequently declared a distinct, a sensible, and irresistible impulse, hurried them on to the fatal deed, and which they expressly assigned to the devil.

“ Then you do not suppose there is any truth in the legendary tales of the devil assuming the human form, and thus tempting mankind to wickedness ? ”

By no means ! But I believe the devil, if not now, at least before the coming of Christ, gained so thoroughly the possession of the will and per-

son of certain unfortunate individuals as to have them under his absolute control.

“ What is your notion of witchcraft ? ”

It perhaps may all be reduced to mere jugglery and delusive attempts, being dregs of the old heathen abominations. Such instances as the magicians of Pharaoh, and the witch of Endor, might be express interferences of divine power. In the one case, to harden Pharaoh’s heart, so as to effect the divine purpose in leading the tyrant and his people to their own destruction ; and in the other, to convey a prophecy to Saul when he least expected a revelation from the offended Jehovah.

“ You say that God created man in his own image, when did the devil gain such influence over him ? ”

At the fall, for before that event he had no direct access to the human heart.

3. “ What is your opinion of the serpent, the tempter ? ”

That the devil entered this animal, and spoke by its organs ; and perhaps one reason why he chose it was its familiarity with Eve, on account of its peculiar beauty and fine soft skin, for both of which certain of the serpent tribes are still remarkable.

"What advantage did the devil propose to reap from the seduction of our first parents?"

The same as bad men, when they disseminate their atheistical notions among youth;—the gratification of spite and hatred against God and the human race, and the vain notion of strengthening his cause by numbers.

"If it was by the agency of these fallen powers that the woman was seduced, why was punishment denounced upon the serpent race?"

It may be remarked that all the suggestions of the wicked one are in such a manner as to give the abused, but under such circumstances wicked vehicle, whether man or beast, the notion that the subtlety arises from its own self-sufficiency, and in this case, no doubt, the serpent was puffed up with pride. Should any one, however, be inclined to ridicule the idea of the irrational beast being sensible of the ill it had been instrumental in doing, or of the curse now denounced upon it, he should recollect that its Creator is the person who spoke to it.

4. "Since you say man is a fallen creature, what have you to say of his condition previously to the fall?"

That it was in Paradise, an abode of happiness; and was what we read of in the heathen poets under the description of the golden age. It must,

however, be remarked that there was another golden age with them, that immediately after the flood; and the two are always confounded together, and represented as one and the same. Hence the great confusion in their accounts ; and instead of a single pair, they represent mankind as a numerous society. In all parts of the world where mankind are found, are traces of it in their traditions. The true account is in the first ten chapters of the Bible.

“ What are the chief points that mankind, as spread over the earth, dwell the most upon ? ”

That mankind fell from innocence by the seduction of some foe, whose subtle enmity still continues ; that he thus rebelled against the Gods ; that he became debased in soul ; that he was cast off from converse with the Gods ; that he was expelled from happiness ; that he is now floundering in spiritual darkness and ignorance ;—but that by philosophy and religion ; by sacrifice, ablutions, and the merits of the Great Father, (the promised seed of the woman,) he will hereafter be restored to this blessed abode of purity, knowledge, and felicity. Glimpses of such notions are to be found among all nations of the earth.

“ Do you believe that Adam was perfectly innocent till the time of his fall by the temptation of Eve ? ”

Perhaps not perfectly: there seems to have been some repining before the woman was granted; and there is also some appearance of too great a devotedness to his wife; so that, like all our enjoyments, Adam found his greatest bane in what he had the most set his mind upon.

“What is your opinion of Adam’s temptation when compared with man’s at present?”

That it was altogether adapted to his condition, and equally severe with that of any one of his posterity. He had every thing conducive to comfort and pleasure; but the mind most highly pampered with prosperity is not the one that the best resists temptation.

“Are you aware of the ridicule attempted to be thrown on the man and the woman being trapped by the bait of an apple?”

I am well aware that the scoffing infidel attempts to turn every part of religion into jest, and this along with the rest. So also did the Tempter himself, when he was carrying on the temptation by which Eve fell.

5. “In what light do you view the temptation?”

Exactly as Moses describes it. They had every tree pleasant to the sight and good for food, so that the senses of sight and taste were satiated; but the *instinct* for knowledge, which is still so raging,

both as idle curiosity and as a means of power, was every moment stimulated by the sight of the tree which promised its full gratification.

“ How was the temptation conducted ? ”

Exactly as the infidel of the present day carries on his insidious attempts to poison the minds of unsuspecting youth. The Tempter began with sceptical insinuations, that it was absurd to suppose that they might not eat of so promising a fruit ; the pleasures of nature, he asserts, should not be abridged. This being listened to, he played the metaphysician upon the expression ‘ die,’ as if it meant only the instant dissolution of soul and body, and not spiritual death. He gives the lie flatly to the assertion that they should die in this sense of the word. But at the same time he plies the certainty of obtaining a large accession of knowledge, so as to soar above prejudice and credulity. He thus inflames the instinct *hope*. He did not insinuate, there is no God ; this would have shocked her into alarm ; but he intimates, there are more Gods than one. (‘ Polytheism,’ says Hume, in his seduction of youth, ‘ is the most natural religion to man.’) Having done this, he boldly asserts, ‘ Ye shall be as Gods’ ; ye shall have at least one attribute in common with them, to know as much as they. But to know good and evil, did not mean knowledge simply, but to know by experience, possession, enjoyment. He

in effect says, ‘ Ye shall be as Gods, possessing every thing ; ye shall possess all good, and if there be any evil, ye shall have it along with the good.’

“ Do you suppose the woman innocent till the time she ate of the fruit ? ”

No :—she had gone through a process of evil. She had listened to bold profanity, to sceptical insinuations, and had lent a willing ear to blasphemy. She had permitted the divine fitness of things in God’s commandments to be questioned and denied. She had quietly submitted to hear the lie given flatly to his word ; and she had listened to suggestions, which tended to show she was under improper restraint by such command. She had willingly accepted a proposal for self-exaltation by direct rebellion against the lawful government of God. And this for a bribe of being put in possession of all things good, bad, and indifferent. The mere act of eating was therefore but the seal to the deed.

“ How was the man seduced ? ”

By the winning softness of the woman, as intimated in the denunciation of the punishment to each.

6. “ What is your view of the expression, ‘ In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die ’ ? ”

The phrase, ‘thou shalt surely die,’ may be rendered thus, ‘dying thou shalt die;’ signifying that from that time the seeds of mortality should be sown in his body, which should produce its dissolution ; and that the soul should die, or suffer eternal death, that is, separation from the Divine presence and glory.

“ And how was this executed ? ”

The man did eat; but, by the seduction of the woman, and therefore a redemption was planned. The sentence was really executed ; but the body is redeemed from corruption, and the soul from the great adversary, so that the man is again presented perfect before his Creator.

“ What immediately ensued on the fall ? ”

Instead of instant death, man is promised redemption by the seed of the woman, but is put under a different probation. He is expelled from Paradise, but has a type of redemption in sacrifice, that should be the touchstone of his faith till the redemption was made. This was applied directly to his senses, as well as to his faith. The reality of sin, or its offensiveness in the sight of a just God, was signified by the animal suffering what the man ought to have suffered ; and it also typified what the Redeemer himself should suffer in the act of redemption.

7. "How do you expound the text, 'I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed ; thou shalt bruise his heel, but he shall bruise thy head ?'"

Our first parents, as well as all their posterity in the line of Seth, undoubtedly considered it as the promise of deliverance in the Messiah. On the birth of Cain, Eve exclaimed, 'I have gotten a man from the Lord,' or as some expound, 'The man, the Lord Jehovah himself ;' no doubt, believing her hopes of deliverance from the effects of her offence were realized. As to the *enmity*, and what follows, it was fulfilled by the death of Christ ; and that malevolence which the wicked have always manifested against true believers. In it also is the origin of the hatred of infidels, in scripture called the children of the devil, against the human race ; which is so great, that mankind have been repeatedly challenged to instance one beneficial measure originated by them ; as if God, in his beneficence, disdained to have any assistance from them. False religion is not content with tyranny over others, but even loads itself with self-inflicted torments and immolations.

"What have you to say of the devil's punishment ?"

It is intimated by the words, 'He shall bruise thy head ;' and refers to the deadly blow Christ, by his death, should give to man's great adversary, leading him and his captivity captive, in the gene-

ral resurrection, and subjecting him, as a passive sufferer, to the Almighty's eternal wrath.

8. "What was the woman's peculiar punishment?"

The pain of child-bearing and subjection to her husband, which has, in the latter part, been executed with the utmost rigour.

9. "What was the man's punishment?"

It was in the curse of the ground, by which they were both condemned to toil for bread; their banishment from the Divine presence, with conscious loss of innocence; and their really knowing good and evil by experience, the former lost, the latter gained. This consisted in their sense of nakedness, bodily want, and destitution; and their conscious need of a mediator between their own guilty souls and their Creator.

10. "What is your notion of the curse of the ground?"

That as God always in this world works by means and instruments, when the earth was in its paradisiacal state, its external ingredients were regularly blended over the whole of its surface, and not as they are now, in alternating mountains of barren rocks, plains of arid sands and sluggish clays. As all the materials at the surface of the earth are in the exact proportions, if duly blended,

for the ingredients of the most fertile soil, I conceive they were so blended and disposed before the fall and the consequent curse.

"When do you suppose this happy composition of the earth's surface was disturbed?"

Immediately after the fall, or between that event and the deluge. It was the curse taking effect.

"How do you suppose this brought to pass?"

By great revolutions of the terrestrial surface at various periods; so that the materials were separated into their homogeneous kinds; and thus we have sandstone, limestone, and aluminous rocks or formations alternately succeeding each other.

"But was not the curse removed after the Deluge?"

To a certain degree. Seed time and harvest; summer and winter; rain and fair weather were granted. And as the Deluge swept over the surface of the whole earth, so it in part re-blended the materials, and gave us fertile vales, dells, and slopes; and thus, the Almighty still working by means or second causes, was the curse to a great degree removed.

"What is your inference from the alternate ranges of limestone, sandstone, and clay on the surface of the globe?"

That as man, by his own exertion and the blessing of God through the Redeemer, is to regain the heavenly paradise; so by his bodily industry in cultivating the earth and re-blending the materials thus disposed, he is, by the divine blessing, encouraged to make earth approach more nearly to its paradisiacal state.

11. "What have you to say of Cain?"

Christ denounced the devil as a liar and a murderer from the beginning; Cain was the first murderer and liar on earth; though he could not disbelieve in the Supreme Being, or a Great First Cause: yet, as he imagined God's eye was not upon him when he murdered his brother, he was the first *Deist* or *Atheist*. By his not making intercession with sacrifice in the shedding of blood, he testified his disbelief in the atonement and the reality of sin; and therefore he was the first *Unitarian*.

"What was the immediate incentive to the slaying of his brother?"

By offering contrary to the Divine injunction, and the non-acceptance of his oblation, he was deposed from the representation of the Messiah, which embraced the office of priest and king. These devolved on Abel; and therefore he, in obedience to the enmity of the devil, slew him;

“ You rest the argument, then, upon man’s conduct as a social creature ? ”

Yes : inasmuch as his conduct to others will ever be the result of the government, according to the divine will, which he has of his instincts or passions ; for ‘from the heart, or the seat of these instincts,’ says one who well knew the very composition of them, ‘ proceed all those things which defile the man,’ and these are what entrench on the well being of his fellow-creatures.

“ What is your inference from the treatment of the female sex generally considered ? ”

That man is indeed a fallen creature. Every heathen abomination was engrafted upon some divine institution ; and along with their notion of lost happiness, mankind ever retained a notion that somehow or other the female sex was chiefly the cause of this loss ; and that in consequence, woman became a degraded creature, impure, odious in the sight of the gods, and unfit to be present in any religious ceremonies. The depraved nature of man, being incited by the great enemy of mankind to whatever is the most inimical to the welfare of the human race, and biased by notions so prejudicial to the happiness of the female sex, avenged itself on the helpless daughters of Eve with a spirit and atrocity truly diabolical. Wherever human nature has been the most savage, there has

corrupted before God ; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth ; and the earth was filled with violence. The Creator saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented him that he had made man upon the earth, and it grieved him at the heart, and determined him to destroy them.

“ And do you consider this a proof of your grand position, that ‘man is a fallen creature’?”

Certainly I do : nor can any one imagine a stronger.

“ What expedient did the Creator adopt for securing a better race of inhabitants for the post-diluvian world ?”

He bore witness to Noah, that he found him, and him alone, righteous. He therefore saved him and his family from the general ruin, and re-peopled the world with their posterity.

“ And were not they of the fallen race ?”

Certainly they were, and they soon began to give proofs of it. But they have never been so corrupt as the posterity of Cain and those seduced by them. The Almighty shortened the span of human life ; put mankind under such laws as cut them off when transgressed, both individually and

as nations. He made wickedness to correct itself, by its insuring the destruction and annihilation of the wicked. (See the first seven verses of Chapter IX. Gen.)

"What proof can you give of man being a fallen creature, from a general survey of the human race from the Flood to the present time?"

Every one that is needed. The most striking is the tardy reception of Christianity:—for so conducive are its laws to the temporal welfare of mankind, that if man were not a fallen creature, being as he is a rational creature, it would as soon as proposed be universally embraced; and earth, as to the mutual kindness, compassion, and good-will of its inhabitants, would be a real paradise. That those, who pretend to be under the genial influence of Christianity, should still exhibit a great deal of what is so conspicuous among the Heathens, is but a proof that man, whether Christian or Heathen, still has a corrupted nature to struggle with. If priestly domination prevail in certain communities called Christian, this must be placed to the score of the old Heathen leaven; for in proportion to the true spirit of Christianity, will such tyranny decrease; as the more involved in Heathen darkness any nation is, the more is it tyrannized over by those who pretend to be the expounders of the will of their Gods.

“ What are the great religious distinctions in this world’s population ? ”

In round numbers, the inhabitants of the earth are taken at from eight hundred to a thousand millions. Taking the lesser number, they have been thus divided : Heathens, four hundred and eighty-two millions. Christians, one hundred and seventy five millions and a half; Mohammedans, one hundred and forty millions. Above half of the population of the world are, therefore, still Pagans; and if the Mohammedans are added, full three fourths are so. Little more than one fifth are Christians; and of these the greater number are only in a small degree removed from the barbaric ignorance of Pagan idolatry. The Roman Catholics are eighty millions; the Protestants, sixty-five millions and a half; and the Greek or Eastern Church, thirty millions.

“ Can you advance any argument in proof of man being a fallen creature, from the supposition of what his conduct would have been if he had not been so ? ”

Yes : for as man is a rational creature, on this supposition of his not being a fallen and depraved creature, he would promote to the utmost of his ability the happiness of those around him ; as the most sure mode of insuring his own happiness.

“ You rest the argument, then, upon man’s conduct as a social creature ? ”

Yes : inasmuch as his conduct to others will ever be the result of the government, according to the divine will, which he has of his instincts or passions ; for ‘from the heart, or the seat of these instincts,’ says one who well knew the very composition of them, ‘ proceed all those things which defile the man,’ and these are what entrench on the well being of his fellow-creatures.

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the condition of the female sex been the most intensely wretched.

“ But is this general ? ”

In certain countries where the worship of the female deities prevailed over the male, it was otherwise : and among the Celtic tribes of Western Europe, our forefathers, women have always held their proper rank in society ; the helpmate, the faithful friend, and beloved companion of man ; but these instances are only like the Oases in the wide waste of the African desert.

“ What other general feature in the heathen world have you in favour of your position that ‘ Man is a fallen creature ’ ? ”

All their institutions, as well as their general behaviour, are founded on such a blind selfishness as if to render this world a scene of misery was their only aim. Their weaknessness of human life ; their propensity to distort the human face divine ; their harsh treatment of each other ; and their utter want of all affection and virtue. Even in the female sex, bad as their males treat them, their own behaviour to each other, whether in the open forests of savage life, or in the secluded prisons of the eastern harem, is such as to excite our astonishment for its utter and diabolical depravity. The spirits of envy, jealousy, hatred, and

revenge are the only inmates of their bosoms, with not one shade of virtue to qualify the dire array.

“ And what proof do you bring from the Christian world ? ”

The constant drudgery, destitution, and slavery of one for the luxury of another ; and that selfish blindness, or mockery and knavery in politicians, when they tell us that the prodigality of the rich promotes the comfort of the industrious poor.

“ Have you any other glaring proof ? ”

Yes :—many, but especially man’s propensity to war. He has plenty to eat, drink, and supply every want. Yet behold him marshalling himself by thousands in battle array, and cutting off equal numbers of his fellow-creatures, as if to make sport for the grand enemy of mankind. And after all, there are found among us, those who lay claim to the possession of reason, denying their assent to the fact that man is in deed and in truth ‘a fallen creature.’

“ What support have you in Scripture of this doctrine ? ”

It is the foundation on which the superstructure of redemption was built ; and consequently the whole theme of the sacred writings ; the sum and substance of the Christian dispensation, as well as the root of all the heathen idolatry. The first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans is called ‘the unfolded map of man’s fallen nature.

CHAPTER V.

THE HEATHEN WORLD.

1. “What is Pagan Idolatry?”

The corruption of the true religion, *Patriarchism*, as practised by Adam, Seth, Enoch, Lamech, and the other antediluvian worthies; by Noah and his family immediately after the flood; and by Job, Melchisedec, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the Israelites till the time of Moses, who fenced it from idolatrous corruption by the Levitical priesthood and institutions, as the Almighty gave him directions.

“What do you conceive to be the immediate source of idolatry?”

The unwillingness to submit the will and affections to God: the ungrateful task of keeping a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man.

“And how did idolatry originate from this?”

Men of depraved hearts and worldly wisdom took advantage of it; philosophized upon the divine law as transmitted from Adam to Noah; refined upon its efficacy, and explained away its force. Then, for political purposes, they proposed

to take the management of spiritual affairs upon themselves, and to conduct the business of the conscience for other men, on condition that they would till the land and perform other offices of bodily labour. And such is the natural disposition of man, that he would rather toil many hours every day, and have the rest of his time for licentious diversion, than have less bodily labour, but submit his carnal desires to the restraint which the law of God imposes on them.

“Who were the first that took on them the office of managing or keeping the consciences of others?”

The posterity of Ham. He and his race seem to have been, after the Flood, what Cain and his posterity were before it,—the corrupters of the human race.

“To what degree were the immediate fathers of the Heathen world acquainted with the antediluvian history?”

Noah would be familiar with all the antediluvian patriarchs, except Adam, Seth and Enoch. But as his grandfather Methuselah lived with Adam 243 years, and did not die till four or five years before the Flood, when Noah was near 600 years old, and his children almost 100; he and his family would be well informed of all which Adam knew of the Creation and Fall. And as Noah and

his sons lived three or four hundred years after the Deluge, when the human race was very numerous; the different families of the heathens, when they dispersed and spread themselves over the face of the earth, would carry with them a voluminous historical account of all the antediluvian affairs, as well as the postdiluvian history to the dispersion.

“ What have you to say of the birth of Noah ?”

His father, at it, uttered that well-remembered prophecy—“ This same shall comfort us, concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.” And so it proved, since to him, after the Flood, God promised that he would not again curse the ground for man’s sake. But that, “ while the earth remained, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night should not cease.”

“ What testimony, besides the Bible, have you of Noah, his ark, and the Deluge ?”

All that can be desired. Wherever mankind have been found, from the learned Egyptian, the polished Greek, the ancient Celtic nations, the Scandinavian of the north to the poor outcasts of the South Sea Islands, both their mythology and their poetry have been founded on the traditional tales of this event, and its collateral history. But their great hero, their God-man, sailing over

the shoreless flood, the bottomless abyss, and saving himself and companions in a marvellous bark, is the most prominent feature.

“ What is the most remarkable incident in the life of Noah, after the Flood ?”

His planting the vine, and being inebriated with the produce.

“ What was the consequence ?”

It occasioned his son Ham, and perhaps certain other members of his family, to display the depravity of their hearts. The affair called forth the malediction of the aged patriarch, which virtually excommunicated Ham and his posterity in Canaan, who, it seems, was involved in the guilt of his father. By Ham’s posterity, (of whom were the Greeks and Romans,) this affair is referred to in Jupiter’s (Ham) behaviour towards his father Saturn (Noah). Jupiter is said by them to have mutilated his father’s person, to have dispossessed him of his empire, and sent him into exile. The incident also gave rise to the drunken god Bacchus. And as Adam and Noah were in their cosmogony repetitions of each other, and thus usually confounded together, it was both confounded with the Fall of Adam and considered as a repetition of it.

“ What have you to say of the sacrifice imme-

diately after the Flood, and the first appearance of the rainbow?"

In the second chapter of Genesis it is said, "The Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, but there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground." From this it may be inferred, there was no rain before the Flood. Soon after Noah had removed the covering from his ark, it is very probable there fell a heavy rain, when from a dread of another deluge, he sought the Lord with prayer and sacrifice. Then it was, in the subsiding shower, that he and his family were astonished with the rainbow. At the same time the promise of security was given, with the assurance of food, and the command to increase and multiply: and therefore, it was not only styled in the heathen world the messenger of the queen of heaven, (the ark,) the daughter of wonder, but the Eros, or true bow of Cupid.

"What have you to say of the commands at this time given as the conditions of the divine blessing?"

That to this very day it has been well or ill with every nation and people, as they complied with them or otherwise.

2. "You say that the family of Ham philosophized upon the divine law: they would undoubtedly have a system. What was their theory?"

The cosmogonies or mundane systems may be considered the key to the whole fabric of their philosophy and theology.

“What originated this absurd doctrine?”

It had its source in that instinct of the human soul called *imitation*. Man was made in the image and similitude of his Creator; and every individual part of this world, in many prominent features, is in the image and similitude of others. In creating man, the Creator copied himself; and this analogy runs through all nature. This, I consider to be the origin of that wild system of physiology, called the cosmogony of the world.

“What was the leading idea?”

That the Creation, the Fall, the gathering into the Ark, the Flood, the Destruction of the Old World, with the rest of its history, was one complete mundane system. A perfect and correct repetition of one immediately before it, as *that* of a still preceding one, and so upwards to eternity; and the exact copy or substance of the one then commencing from Noah, as the former from Adam, with a repetition downwards into eternity.

“To what personal account did Ham’s family turn this?”

Adam and his three distinguished sons commenced the antediluvian world, and from Seth, the

youngest, arose the Sons of God. In like manner Noah's world had risen from his three sons. Of these Ham was the youngest, and from this circumstance they arrogate the inherent pre-eminence of being the Sons of God, or a divine seed, while the rest were all of a *plebeian* or an *earth-born* race. Cush and his family are supposed to have originated this; and they became the priests, warriors and nobles among the rest, and as such, headed the various tribes in their dispersions: hence we always find two distinct races, the heaven-descended and the earth-born, which also originated the *castes* as they to this day exist in India.

“ What was the leading feature in their theology ?”

It is so nearly identical with their philosophy, that they cannot well be considered apart. The two sources of the divinity imputed to Noah, the Great Father, the King of Gods and Men in the heathen world, were,

1. The Spirit moving on the face of the waters in the primeval chaos, and coming forth in Adam, the father of the human race; which was repeated in the next mundane system, by Noah floating in the ark in the watery chaos of the Deluge, and coming forth the great progenitor of a new world.

2. When Adam fell there was the promised *seed*

of the woman to bruise the enemy's head. When Cain was born, Eve expected him to be the promised seed. A like hope was expressed at the birth of Seth, as well as at that of Noah. As this patriarch not only triumphed over the wicked inhabitants of the old world, but also the destroying flood itself, he fulfilled their notions of the true Saviour, the promised Seed. Instead, therefore, of considering him as a type of Christ, they pretended he was the real Incarnate God, the Man Jehovah, who had destroyed the wicked, and brought the righteous, his redeemed, into a better world.

"How did the notion of female deities originate?"

When the punishment of the Fall was denounced, and the promise of redemption given, the promised Deliverer was to be the Seed of the woman. No human father is referred to. He was, therefore, to be born of a virgin mother. They speculated thus: Adam was born from the earth, the great mother, before it was polluted with seed. His children were not considered as distinct persons, but the more perfect unfolding of himself. As the earth brought him forth, Eve brought them forth. The ark was to Noah what the earth and Eve were to Adam. It received him, and then set him forth, multiplicated in his children. The ark therefore was a repetition of the earth and

Eve ; and stood in all the relationships to Noah as the earth and Eve to Adam,—his wife, his sister, his daughter, and his mother. His wife and mother, as multiplying himself in the production of his children ; his sister, they being the only pair, Adam and Eve ; his daughter as made from one of Adam's ribs, or the ark fabricated by Noah. Thus Juno was the wife and sister of Jupiter ; and a like incestuous connection is discoverable in the chief deities of every nation. Adam, before Eve was created, was the double-sexed parent, and so was Noah in the ark. Adam was a second time born in the birth of his children ; and Noah, in his second birth from the ark, was the *bimater* deity.

“ How do you account for the origin of the lesser deities ? ”

Both Adam and Noah were also speculated on as sons, from the great parent, chaos and the spirit, and the flood and the ark. And the great mother was also viewed as a daughter. But the multiplicity of gods, as among the Greeks and Romans, thus originated. When the posterity of Noah dispersed in tribes and nations over the face of the earth, each carried away its own version of the mundane history. One was peculiarly attached to one part, another to another. And as their religion was now a mere mummery, or drama, each according to fancy chose a portion of the

great father's history. But in the course of time, these tribes in their wanderings and warfare, as was remarkably the case with the Greeks, met together by different routes. And as their language differed, they had various titles for their chief deities, especially as each dwelt on particular exploits, according to their natural genius. Hence, by one people, their chief deity was celebrated as the god of war, by another as the god of love, or as the god of wine, or fire. Yet all agreed in having certain characteristics in some part of his history, that proved him in reality to be the original great father : and the same of the goddesses.

“ What have you to say of the *Fates* ? ”

As Adam and his three sons commenced the first world, and Noah and his three the second ; and one mundane system is the exact repetition of the preceding one *ad infinitum*, they leaped to the grand conclusion, that every person who had lived in one system, would again re-live in another, and perform the identical routine of actions ; hence whatever the will and the power of the gods might be, they could not reverse these decrees of this fixed order called the *Fates*.

“ What was the leading idea in their philosophy ? ”

1. As the Spirit brooded upon the primitive chaos, they conceived them to be the great father,

body and soul; the Great First Cause, containing in his ample womb the whole creation. He unfolded himself, and Adam, and all the objects of creation were therefore his limbs, and equally part of the Divinity. This is materialism, and the eternity of matter. When thus unfolded, he was the great universal PAN or Jupiter. The skies his face, the earth and seas his vast womb, and below the infernal regions, his feet.

2. As the primeval chaos was supposed to be the ruin of a former world, the same analogy was sought for in the Flood. Here was Nox or Chaos, and Erebus or Noah. As the ark in its womb contained Noah, the animals, and seeds of corn; when he opened the ark, the Great Parent was again unfolding himself, and coming forth the god of love crowned with the rainbow.

“ How did they speculate on the analogies of nature ? ”

They compared all to a mundane system; as a rise from chaos to the open and full creation; and then a return to chaos. Thus they considered the seasons, day and night, and animal life. All died for a new life in another system, for nothing was farther from their minds than our modern infidels' endless sleep or annihilation.

“ How did they philosophize on the female deity ? ”

They considered all the energies of nature under two principles : Chaos, the earth, Eve and the ark, were the *female*; and the spirit, Adam and Noah, different forms of the *male*. They then principleized every thing, as light and darkness, good and evil, renovation and decay. In short, all need of a Creator, and a creation, was done away, and every thing from system to system was eternal.

“ What was their notion of the intermediate state ? ”

That it was a copy of Noah’s abode in the ark ; and as the ark has three stories, it had its Elysium, Hades, and Tartarus.

“ How did they speculate on the sacrifice ? ”

They knew that sacrifice typified the labours and sufferings of the Great Father, “ the Promised Seed.” That he was to struggle with the great enemy ; be overcome by him ; suffer death ; but in that death should extinguish the enemy’s power, and rise again the triumphant lord of a new world. All this they imagined was literally fulfilled by Noah. The enemy was Python or the Deluge. Noah’s descent into the ark was called his death ; his abode therein was the triumphing over the enemy in the intermediate state, and his leaving the ark was the resurrection to be the glorious father of a new mundane system.

“ But with what consistency could they make Noah offer sacrifice ? ”

As sacrifice was a symbol, and all parts of the creation but limbs of the unfolded Great Parent ; and since the “ Promised Seed,” the incarnate God was to offer himself a willing victim in man’s stead ; so Noah was both the offerer and the offering, the priest and the sacrifice ; for he offered part of himself whatever was the victim.

“ How came human beings to be offered in sacrifice ? ”

The human race was but a multiplication of the Great Father, more intimately his substance than mere animals, and therefore the more efficacious. Among the numerous forms of the Great Father, sacrifice was one ; and many of his titles are indicative of this—as *Hi* in the name of the Chinese god Fo-hi.

“ What nation was the most addicted to the horrid practice of human sacrifice ? ”

It is hard to say. Among our Celtic ancestors it prevailed as much as in other nations, but perhaps not more. The large wicker idols in which the victims were interwoven, were symbols of the destruction of the world. But it was the custom of many heathen nations, to devote one of so many children to sacrifice. The most beautiful was set apart. When this took place, it was crowned with garlands, and

worshipped as a divinity. It was charged with messages to the other world. It was supposed to be absorbed into the glorious essence of the Great Father, and thus became the intercessor, the mediator, and guardian spirit of the family.

“ What did they understand by burning the sacrifice ? ”

Fire was to be to the present system what water was to the preceding one. It was one form of the great enemy. Burning the sacrifice was therefore a symbol of the general conflagration. It was the contracting together of the unfolded Great Father to his simple principle, chaos and spirit.

“ How did they consider sacrifice in its sacramental character ? ”

As man fell from innocence, happiness and immortality, the returning of the world to chaos by the Deluge, was but a baptism, or a cleansing from pollution. It returned to its purity in the person of the great father Noah, and the chaos the elements of a new creation ; and the general conflagration, symbolized by consuming the sacrifice by fire, is to cleanse our present system from its pollutions. But since wicked men quitted this world without purification by fire, they invented Tartarus, where this process is carried on to fit them for the next system. The Romish church still retains it in her purgatory.

“ What have you to say of self-immolation, which still prevails to so horrid a degree in India ? ”

They thus, like the Great Father, make willing offerings of themselves ; and believe they shall be immediately absorbed into his glorious essence.

“ What divinity did they ascribe to the heavenly bodies ? ”

1. They considered them the purer parts of the essence of the great father, the light which came forth from chaos, when God divided the light from the darkness ; the depositories of the sacred fire that animates the universe, symbolized by a perpetual fire, attended by Vestal virgins. 2. They were the spirit brooding over the chaos, the earth, the sea, the infernal regions and bottomless abyss, piloted by Noah (the sun) and the seven members of his family (the moon and planets). 3. The sun and moon were each the great double-sexed parents,—the ark, the intermediate state, Elysium, Hades, and Tartarus,—through which each soul must pass in its purification for a new system, and the depositories (especially the moon) of every thing lost on earth. The man in the moon (Noah in his ark) was only banished to the nursery when the world became Christian. 4. The sun was simply the abode of the soul of the great father, and the moon of that of the great mother ; and the stars

were animated by the souls of other great personages, whence they were supposed to influence the destinies of mankind ; and thus originated the foolish science of *Astrology*.

“ How did they philosophize on Noah’s three sons, and the seven members of his family ? ”

Adam multiplicated himself into three sons ; Noah did the same. The ark had three stories. They found a triadism in every form of the great father ; heaven, earth, and hell—or, three kingdoms of the Grecian mythology, Jupiter (Ham) heaven, Neptune (Japheth) the sea, and Pluto (Shem) the infernal regions, or Tartarus. Some have attempted to trace in these the knowledge of the Christian Trinity, as if revealed to the antediluvian patriarchs ; but the position is untenable.

The great father was also said to be septemplicated in the seven persons of Noah’s family—hence the sacred number *seven*. A city is a symbol of the ark, surrounded by its walls, the mundane circle that begirds the world at the horizon ; or that formed by the shore of Mount Ararat, when the Deluge was retiring and leaving the ark upon it.

“ What was the chief strength of this absurd system of the Heathen world ? ”

The sacred mysteries.

“ What were these ? ”

They were managed by the priesthood, and were a kind of dramatic representation of the chief parts of religion ; as 1. The creation arising out of chaos, or the unfolding of the great double-sexed parent, and their philosophy founded thereon. 2. The birth and baptism of man, his death, the passage of the soul to the intermediate state, its abode therein, and resurrection to eternal life. These were all hung upon the history of Noah passing through the Deluge ; his baptism ; his entering into the ark, his mythological death, his abode therein, the intermediate state ; and his coming forth, the resurrection. In the sixth book of Virgil’s *Aeneid* is a description of their intermediate state, and as much of the sacred mysteries as was permitted by the priesthood to be divulged. They were divided into the lesser, or *philosophy*, and the greater, or *theology*.

“ Do you suppose that from the first the object of the priesthood was downright idolatry in these ? ”

No ; perhaps not. Those who first broach errors seldom surmise the extent to which they run. Their object was probably, at first, a kind of helps in managing the affairs of the conscience of others. But they soon became a sort of machinery to expedite the work of repentance, and to deal out

the efficacy of the sacraments. They were identical with the mass in the Roman Catholic church, and in them the priesthood's power was centered ; because into them the warriors, the nobles, and rulers were initiated ; and thus were supposed to receive something of a superior nature that qualified them for high stations. They were regenerate, and no longer floundering in the ignorance and darkness of the plebeian race.

“ To what power did the priesthood lay claim ? ”

They represented their chief priest, as for instance the Arch-druid of the Celtic nations of Western Europe, as the vehicle through which the Spirit of the Great Father, the “ Promised Seed,” emanated from Noah ; and therefore he was God’s vicegerent, with full power in heaven, earth, and hell ; and could dispense pardon of all sin, past, present, or to come. He was what the chief priest is to this day in many Heathen nations, the Lama of Thibet, and the Pope of Rome.

“ Where were the sacred mysteries celebrated ? ”

The temple was a copy of the ark internally, and, externally, of the mountain Ararat. But the ark was also one form of the internal, or womb of the Great Father, and therefore was mythologically identical with the *world* or visible creation. Mount Ararat was the external person of the Great Father ; as was also the external part of the

temple, as well as every hill, when consecrated. Its top (the Olympus) being the abode of the gods, the High Place of the Bible, while the deep recesses of the sacred groves, the adytum of the temples, and even the tops of Olympus, were the places of the sacred mysteries. But, generally, the centre of the hill was supposed to be the real and true paunch of the Deity, and therefore a cave at its foot was usually made use of. The first artificial Ararat was the Tower of Babel. It was never finished, but enough remained to declare its plan. The pyramids of Egypt, and the pagodas of the East, are copies, as well as many antient temples of the West.

“ Had they any other mythological dwellings of the chief deities ? ”

Yes ; in the triplicate form of the Great Father, they had Jupiter’s residence on Olympus, hence the celestial deities ; Neptune’s at the centre of the ocean, with all the sea deities down to water kelpies and mermaids ; and Pluto’s, the gloomy Dis of the Celts, and Odin of the Scandinavian nations ; with all the varieties of sprites down to the fairies, which had their residence at the earth’s centre.

“ What have you to say of the four Paradisiacal rivers mentioned by Moses ? ”

They were each separately, and all united, considered as forms of the Deluge, contemplated as the

Great Father; and these were the origin of all sacred rivers. The Deluge had a sanative quality which purified the old world: consecrated rivers, fountains, and the holy water in the Romish church have the same. In their mythological intermediate state, they are Styx, Acheron, Cocytus and Phlegethon, with Charon, a personification of Noah and his ark.

“ What have you to say of the metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls ?”

This was understood variously by different nations. Some held that souls passed out of this world, and awaited in the intermediate state a like routine in another mundane system ; others, that they passed from one body to another in this world ; and some, that they were metamorphosed from men to animals, and then back again to men.

“ How were they initiated into the mysteries ?”

The mysteries were a kind of Free-masonry, and death was the consequence of divulging the secret. Few, besides the higher order of the priesthood, were admitted to every part of the greater mysteries. In them the aspirant was to brave all the perils of the Great Father in the person of Noah. It seems they were well contrived to prove the strength both of his mind and of his nerves. Every people and nation, or tribe, according to its means,

had contrivances for this purpose ; such as long dark passages, reported to lead down to the centre of the earth, where the presiding spirits dwelt. But however widely mankind were dispersed, the mysteries, in the leading characters, were the same ; and the priesthood, whether Druids, Magi, Brahmin, or whatever else, were but one brotherhood.

4. "What led to the confusion of language by divine interference at the Tower of Babel?"

When the earth had been divided by divine direction, Nimrod, whose name signifies rebel, opposed the divine injunction to disperse ; trained his followers to arms in his hunting expeditions ; and commenced the building of the city and tower for a rallying point.

"In what do you suppose the confusion of language consisted?"

Not in the change of words so much as in pronunciation. For the sacred penman speaks of their language or *lip* being confounded. And as by this time religious animosities ran very high, to the scoffers it is very probable, the change of lip or pronunciation seemed the effect of mocking each other. The interference of divine providence is generally hid from the eyes of the wicked, under what appears to them chance or the common course of nature. But however this might be, tradition says they did not separate without a

bloody battle, in which Nimrod and his rebellious crew had the worst.

“ What do you suppose the primitive language to have been, and how many languages now arose ?”

The Hebrew appears to have the greatest claim to this high distinction ; and learned men, such as Sir W. Jones, have supposed that all others may be reduced to this, and other three : the Sclavonic, or that spoken by Japheth’s posterity, the Sanscrit, or Ham’s, and the Arabic or Chaldean, Shem’s.

“ When and how was the earth’s surface divided to Noah’s posterity ?”

In the days of Peleg, before the death of Noah. To Japheth was assigned Europe, with Asia Minor, and northern Asia. His name signifies enlargement, and his posterity is supposed, though not till long after the Christian æra, to have passed from the north-east of Asia into America. To Shem was given southern and eastern Asia. And to Ham, Africa. But the rebellious posterity of Ham, especially in the line of Cush, are supposed to have mingled with all the tribes of Shem and Japheth ; while that of Canaan seized the Holy Land, till dispossessed by the Israelites.

“ How did Infinite Wisdom effect this dispersion to the utmost extremity of the earth ?”

They, being conscious of a fallen nature, and a capacity for infinite happiness, which they believed they had lost, imagined it was recoverable upon earth, to the east or west, whither the sun went at setting, and whence he came at rising. They boldly pushed forward in both these directions. They that came westward imagined they had it in every new discovered land or island. These they entered with all the trembling hope that might be expected. England and every other island were in turn considered the region of the blessed or Paradise ; where our first parents enjoyed the golden age, and where Noah landed with his ark. Hence many of their names.

"How do you account for Ham's posterity heading the other tribes?"

Because of the depravity of their hearts, God gave them up to their own devices, as a punishment for listening to such vain philosophy, and for yielding to these innovations in religion.

"To what degree did this influence their morals?"

In religion, morals are every thing. Faith is a cause, morals or practice, the effect. The cause, or faith, is known to God only : the practice is what belongs to man ; and of such importance is it, that it influences the faith. No man was ever infidel or very wicked but by degrees. For though morals are the effects of faith ; yet faith is in a

great degree the reflection of the morals. Both the philosophy and theology of the fathers of the heathen nations led to the greatest abominations human nature is capable of. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah throws light on the subject. For every abomination was sanctioned as a religious rite. For this reason God gave mankind up to be enslaved by their corrupters. But at the same time he called forth Abraham from among them, from whom he raised up a nation to testify his supremacy and providence; and to maintain an uninterrupted prophecy of the real and true Great Father, the Messiah.

5. "Is it not supposed by some that the heathens worshipped devils?"

Yes: this is the opinion of Milton in 'Paradise Lost.' And some passages of our translation of the scriptures seem to favour the idea. But all such passages as say that the heathens sacrificed to devils or daemons, may be translated to the souls of the dead, that is, Noah and his family. But if they did not literally worship the prince of hell, their religion was generally wholly to his mind. Its chief characteristics were cruelty, obscenity, bloodshed, and systematical and unbridled licentiousness.

"What have you to say of the idolatry peculiar to each nation?"

That it was according, not only to the tenets held by the sect before the dispersion, but also to the climate, productions, and other adventitious circumstances.

"Did not all embrace the above principles?"

No: it cannot be supposed that all these absurdities were concocted at once. Some tribes, especially of the unblended Cushites, are supposed to have been offended at others going beyond them in their philosophizing, when the female deity or the worship of the Great Mother was introduced; and withdrew themselves from Nimrod and his party. These tribes retired northward to the Caucasus, (the mountain of Cush,) and thence spread themselves eastward and westward. They paid divine honours to Noah as the incarnate God, the Lord of the universe, under the image and similitude of a contemplative old man in a sitting posture. The golden image of Nebuchadnezzar is an instance, but the more common symbol was a rough stone pillar or a log of wood. Those who went eastward are, to this day in their posterity, known as the sect of the Buddhists: Budd being the name of their god; while he is called Brahma, by the other sect. Juggernaut is a union of both sects, the priests of both combining under one form all the sects and parties. Those who went westward passed into Europe; and were the fierce warriors who, from behind the Danube, annoyed

the Roman empire till in the end they overthrew it. Our Saxon ancestors were of this race. They were always opposed to image worship. They gave in the Christian world the cast of character to the Greek Church, in opposition to the church of Rome with her images and the female deity, the Virgin Mary, or Great Mother. To their blood we owe the Reformation. They were always opposed to *castes* and slavery. Too proud to work, where unblended, they are a half-starved race of marauding hunters. But where mixed with the Celtic tribes, their offspring are the most enterprising and industrious of the human race ; as witness the inhabitants of western Europe.

“ What nations do you consider the worst in the heathen abominations ? ”

Undoubtedly the Canaanites and the surrounding nations, the posterity of Ham. The wickedness of these first came to the full ; and they were cut off. But others in process of time were little short of them in every abomination. This corruption of morals flowed from the worship of the female deity, or the two principles of fecundity.

“ What animals were the most venerated as symbols or vehicles of the spirit of the Great Father ? ”

The bull, and next to that perhaps the serpent. The serpent was often the symbol of the evil spirit, by whom the Great Father was wounded ; and

Python or the Deluge. But these were also considered forms of the Great Father. And hence the serpent symbolized the good principle. When curled round the egg or globe, it signifies the spirit moving on the face of the waters, as well as the Deluge round the earth.

6. "But were there no exceptions either in the priesthood or among the philosophers?"

Yes: Melchisedec is a remarkable instance; and many philosophers saw how utterly corrupt mankind had become; but they could only utter vain lamentations, and declare them beyond recovery by human means, while some pretended to shake off all belief in religion and give themselves up to atheism.

"Do you not think they had good reason for disbelief in such deities?"

Why, yes: only their infidelity did not consist in rejecting the tenets of their theology, but belief in the all-seeing presence of God, and a future state of retribution. In short, they denied the immortality of the soul. They struck at the very root of the existence of society. They set kings and tyrants at liberty from the salutary restraint of the dread of Jupiter's avenging thunder. They gave impunity to disobedience to parents, incest, murder, and licentiousness of every description, and made a sport of blasphemy. Whatever, therefore, the

condition of the human race might be, and however erroneous and even abominable their creed, it is evident that general infidelity would have made the condition of man worse ; and where this the most prevailed, the nations first filled up the measure of their sins, and were the first blotted out from the face of the earth.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PLAN OF REDEMPTION.

“ What is Revealed Religion ?”

It is the duty founded upon the information contained in the Holy Scriptures concerning the existence of the Deity and his attributes, the creation of the human race, and man's condition as it respects the Deity, himself, and his fellow creatures.

“ When and how was this information obtained ?”

It was in various manners and at sundry times vouchsafed to mankind as they stood in need ; for man's necessity is God's opportunity. It is the unfolding of the plan of salvation.

“ How do you distinguish Revealed from Natural religion ?”

Revelation is the key to natural religion. For, however much vain men may boast of the light of nature, without a knowledge of the divine attributes as contained in the Holy Scriptures, nature would have continued to us, as it was to the heathens, an inexplicable labyrinth of difficulties. In short, without this divine information, man could not in

his infant state have existed, although when he gathered strength and knowledge, he erred from it, and struck out a way more indulgent to his passions.

“ You say this information is in the Scriptures ; when were the Scriptures written ? ”

The five books of Moses were the first written, and were not commenced till between eight and nine centuries after the Deluge, when the heathen world was in the state above described. Farther additions were made to these through a space of eleven hundred years, till about four centuries before the Christian era. These are the Scriptures of the Old Testament. The New Testament is the history of Jesus Christ, and some portions of that of certain of his disciples after his decease. It also contains various Letters of his Apostles to certain churches established in different parts of the Roman empire, and the book called the Revelation to St. John.

“ What is the most prominent feature of the Scriptures ? ”

They were not given as a regular treatise either upon the divine attributes or upon the plan of salvation, but are a collection of historical documents of various revelations vouchsafed to strengthen the faith of those to whom they were given. They are rather a collection of glimpses than a full view ;

and men do greatly err when they first assume them to be a regular and formal disquisition set forth of God, and then condemn them as unworthy of such high pretensions. The first chapter of the Bible may be instanced as one of these documents; it is distinct from the rest, and contains the Almighty's *fiat* against the whole system of heathen philosophy, theology, and cosmogony; and Moses in these few verses declared it all false.

“ What do you conceive to be the immediate purpose for which the Scriptures were given ? ”

They are the divine testimony against idolatry; and there cannot be a greater error than to suppose them given to us to satisfy every scruple in our creed. God never set forth any testimony to convince an atheist. And for any one to say the evidence of our religion is not sufficiently convincing, is equivalent to arraigning the Deity in the wisdom of that probation to which he subjects man. When mankind began to obscure in false philosophy all the sacred records handed down by Noah, God chose Abraham, born about the time of that patriarch's death, and from him raised up a nation as a beacon upon a hill to testify to all the families of the earth that he still reigned over them all. To this nation, and for the purpose of guarding them from the idolatry and abominations of the surrounding heathen nations, were all the revelations of the Scriptures given.

“ But mankind you have said never were without revelation ? ”

The fathers of the human race most certainly were not. Though they soon degenerated from the religion of Noah, for which God gave them up to their own inventions, but not so thoroughly as the posterity of Cain ; for he left not himself without witness, in giving them seed-time and harvest, summer and winter, according to his promise. Should we say that certain heathen nations, now, from any benefit they derive from revealed religion as transmitted down from their ancestors, might as well be without it, we should perhaps greatly err. They all have an awe of a great presiding Spirit, and a belief in his avenging power against iniquity ; and their religion is not more absurd than their political institutions. We have no just right to say, God has not his watchful eye over them as well as over us of a better faith.

“ Do you suppose, then, that the poor benighted and perishing heathens, as they are sometimes designated, are within the fold of Salvation ? ”

Were I to suppose the devil has all the heathen world to himself, as we suppose he has the wicked of the Christian world, it would, I think, be very much like supposing him more than a match for God. No : I believe God to redeem as many from the heathens as from the Christians ; and though

he has less glory from man in this world, he will not have less in the great day of redemption, when the glory of many an humble-hearted heathen, who trembled before his idols and cruel priesthood, will eclipse the glory of many a learned but self-exalted Christian.

“ What advantage then has the Christian world over the heathen ? ”

Many ; but perhaps they are more temporal than eternal. With Christianity go civilization and all its advantages, by which the earth, instead of a few starving savages, will maintain its thousands in comfort. It also manifests the goodness of the Deity to the human race, assimilates man to the divine perfections, makes earth approach nearer to its paradisiacal state, and teaches man to glorify the true God and Redeemer on earth before he is admitted to do it in heaven.

2. “ What do you consider the basis of the plan of Salvation ? ”

The word Salvation refers to something lost ; which loss must be antecedent to the saving. The loss in this case is the fall of man, and which, therefore, is the basis of salvation. Salvation or redemption, however, makes no part of that purpose for which the Deity created man. It is an event in his history.

“ What is the purpose for which God created the human race ? ”

The exercise of the goodness of the Creator in imparting happiness and glory to his creature man, and the pleasure he has in the gratitude and contemplation of his creatures enjoying happiness. Man was lost, it is true ; and when this took place in the first pair, we are apt to imagine God might have set them aside, and created another pair for the progenitors of the race. But in this we act unadvisedly ; for if Adam had not fallen, all his race would have been as severely tried as now ; and therefore it was more the mode of probation than the degree that was changed. That we consider Salvation as great a work as Creation, is right enough ; because it is as much calculated to exalt the glory of God in his mercy and goodness as the other in his power. And there is little doubt that in the end all will appear fully as perfect in God’s works as if the devil, by the fall of Adam, had never been permitted to defile them. Gold is equally gold whether in the ore or the furnace ; and a diamond is no less a diamond though sunk in the mine.

“ If I understand you rightly, then, had man never fallen, there never would have been a Saviour to effect salvation ? ”

Certainly : for since man fell, and his body became subject to death, by which we understand

man is in the power of the devil, it seemed good to Divine Wisdom to redeem man by an assumption of the human nature.

“ Will you elucidate a little what you mean by man being in the power of the devil, that I may the more clearly understand how he was redeemed therefrom ? ”

1. By the fall, the devil gained such access to the mind of man, that he can influence his instincts so as to make him throw the weight of his will or free agency into the scale of sensual indulgence, till he finds more pleasure in worldly pursuits than in working the will of God. This is called the empire of Satan here on earth. 2. By the fall, man’s body became subject to death, corruption, and dissolution in the grave. Without this fall, we suppose his material frame would have passed to the glorified state without seeing corruption. It is to be created anew, and is to enter into glory, as perfect as if it had never been dissolved by death. But while the soul is in the intermediate state, and the body is dust and ashes in the grave, they are said, or at least the latter, to be in the empire of Satan.

“ I now conceive I have a tolerably definite idea of the power or empire of the devil, and am prepared to understand the answer to the question, how is man redeemed from it ? ”

As to his soul, the work must be carried on in this world; and on man's part, it is founded on faith and obedience, for without faith the Redeemer can do nothing, and obedience is merely faith in action. By the exertion of man's own will, and the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the instincts are so brought into subjection to the will, that to do the will of God is the chief delight, in opposition to the affections being embarked in the pursuits of worldly pleasure: this is the *first* part of redemption. The *second* is the raising of the dead, and presenting all before God as perfect as if the devil had never prevailed. After this the commission of Christ, as the Redeemer, will expire; and he shall reign the head, the true Great Father of the human race, his human nature serving as an intermediate link between mankind and the Deity.

"This seems plain enough; but it appears that some part of this world's population is not comprehended in the former part of this redemption, and yet you do not exclude them from the latter?"

I have already supposed that the mode of man's probation, rather than the degree, was changed by the fall of Adam, and therefore had Adam not fallen, as all would have been tried, many might have come short of the full measure of glory. Otherwise we must suppose that the devil has caused more than a temporary loss and damage, which I labour to deny. In the work of redemp-

tion on earth, are many who live unto themselves, and not unto God; and bad as their condition at the general resurrection may be, we are to suppose it will not be worse than it might have been, had Adam not fallen. The carnal mind is enmity against God; and there is no repentance nor forgiveness in the grave. They will, therefore, be ushered into God's presence with a hatred of that presence, and a stern defiance of the divine will. Though they are said to be driven from his presence, yet this only means from the presence of his love, called *heaven*, into the presence of his displeasure, called *hell*.

"The inference, then, that I would draw from all this, is, that man's abode here is to fit his mind for the presence of the divine love and glory; and this recalls to my mind what you stated in the first chapter; that, as if by the power of gravitation, those the most like the divine perfection in mind will approach nearest to him; and the next in degree nearest to these; and thus you find a station and degree of glory for every degree of virtue and moral perfection?"

For the sake of elucidating the subject from analogy, I admitted such to be the case. And as we are not, on earth, accustomed to see either animals of an opposite nature, or men of opposite character associate together, any more than men of low life and vulgar habits dwell in the presence of

kings ; and as man was created after the image and similitude of his Creator, and which likeness I have shewn consists in the moral attributes of his soul, and not in outward bodily shape, we hence conclude that man, to be admitted into the divine presence, must resemble God in his chief moral attributes. In the exercise alone of these attributes consists man's free agency. In all others, being as God made him, he cannot be altered. The moral attributes resulting from his own freedom of will depend upon himself : in this respect man is, to a certain degree, what he makes himself. Now, God is all perfect in righteousness and holiness ; these are his chief moral attributes ; and man must be so too, by the merits of the Redeemer, before he is admitted into his presence.

“ You are now unfolding the plan of redemption ; does not redemption imply a mutual contract in which each party gives and receives ? ”

Certainly it does.

“ In this case, then, who were the contracting parties ? ”

Not either man or the devil ; for the latter had obtained possession by fraud, and he was to be despoiled, while man was that of which the devil was possessed, and was utterly incapable of redeeming himself, or of paying a ransom. It rests, therefore, between the Redeemer and the Divine Justice.

“ But although man was fallen, might he not recover himself and make amends by his future good conduct ? ”

No : every tittle of man’s gratitude and service can only discharge the debt which he owes to God for the space of time commensurate with that obedience. A whole life of obedience leaves him no surplus ; one moment of omission incurs a debt which he can never discharge, and one act of disobedience is a crime which he can never atone for ; and this clears away, root and branch, all the pretension of works of supererogation, so much extolled in the Roman Catholic church.

“ Would you call the work of redemption a new work among those set forth at the Creation ? ”

If by new work is meant something different from the rest of God’s works in kind, rather than in degree, it is not so ; it is rather a more ample expansion of the divine goodness, and so perfectly agrees with the rest, that it appears one and the same. It is not a piece of new cloth put upon an old garment, but a renewing of the web, so that in the end there will be no appearance of its having ever been injured. He who creates, redeems also.

3. “ Since you say the operations in the plan of redemption commenced from the fall of Adam, how have they been conducted as distinguishable from the common course of nature ? ”

The divine proceedings in this respect are called providence, which implies an interference or an exertion of divine power for a particular purpose, beyond what is exerted in the common course of nature.

“ Give me some instances ?”

The plan of this world’s history, commonly called the plan of salvation, since redemption has become its distinguishing feature, was no doubt present to the divine mind before the Creation. The produce of the harvest is that which the husbandman looks to before he ploughs and sows ; and the consummation of this world’s history, the reception into glory of all his happy creatures separated from the reprobates, is to the Creator what the heap of clean corn, severed from the chaff, is to the husbandman. This, then, though the last in execution, must have been the first in conception in the divine mind before the Creation was commenced. But since man was indulged with a certain degree of free agency, and a correspondent power of reason under the guardianship of faith, he has always been dealt with by the Almighty as a being whose probation rested and turned upon that faith. Knowing the precise extent of the power of this faith, the divine wisdom is called forth in properly adjusting the evidence to the precise limits of free agency. Now, interferences of divine providence are the adjustments of this balance ; so that faith

may neither become extinct from man's being left too much in the dark, nor destroyed by the evidence being so overpowering that there could be no doubt. No act, therefore, of divine providence is such, but that the carnal mind may evade the evidence, or may, by the exertion of the will in favour of sensual indulgence, rid the conscience of an overpowering conviction ; for every sinful act dims the eye of faith.

" On the supposition that the consummation of this world's history was present to the divine mind before the Creation ; do you not suppose that every individual, and his life, and every action are marked in it ? And if so, how do you prove man to be a free agent, while all his actions thus appear to be pre-ordained ? "

It is in this that man will be always measuring the divine intellect by his own. No sooner is thus much of the divine plan admitted, than some will assert, that whether a person will be finally doomed to heaven or hell must be so too. As if Infinite wisdom and Almighty power could not so devise the plan as to leave room for the free agency of man ; that is, permit each individual of the human race, according to the freedom of his will, to worship the Creator in utter prostration of *self*, or set up *self* in his own heart, in the place of God, and seek for happiness in sensual gratifications and worldly pursuits.

"How do you unfold the plan of divine providence?"

By shewing the analogy between this world's history and any particular part of it. For each part, as already shown, is an image and similitude of the whole.

"Instance the chief acts of divine providence?"

These are recorded in the Bible; so that we are indebted to revelation for them. The whole history of the Jewish people is a chain of acts of providence, each link being a distinct act. Viewed as a nation of a peculiar turn of mind, their history is not so far from natural as to strike with an overpowering conviction. But when we read the various parts of scripture, we find every part of their national history was a key-stone to the whole nations of the earth. Even in defiance of their own perverse disposition, they have, from the very call of Abraham, when God delivered up the heathens to the vanity of their own hearts' lust, unto this very day, been God's witnesses. They are among us a standing miracle; and a miracle is an individual act of providence.

"Is the nation of the Jews, then, the only people among whom the Deity has displayed acts of providence?"

By no means: every nation, viewed abstractedly, is a miracle; for they are, each and all, stones in

the great arch, without any one of which the whole would fall. And such is the immutability of God's laws, although we say he has cast them off, that one nation punishes another, and cuts it off when it retrogrades from, and finally rejects, the great fundamental laws of virtue. While personal virtues continue, national integrity is entire ; when these wane and are trampled on, the other deteriorates and becomes extinct. Another nation of more pristine virtue is already prepared to oppress and destroy, and finally to blot out their names from the face of the earth.

“ In what respect were the Israelites instruments of divine providence ? ”

As soon as Egypt began to be a nation, Abraham is sent thither. Then Joseph, a servant of the true God, is miraculously sent among them to testify against the worship of this nation, now the greatest on the face of the earth. Then comes a change of dynasty ; and an idolatrous people are made the objects of a series of miracles, the plagues of Egypt. When the Israelites are to be established as a nation, all the surrounding nations are struck with awe at the manner in which they obtained possession of the promised land. When they departed from the true faith, the first of the four great empires is in readiness to punish them ; but at the same time the head of it, Nebuchadnezzar, is miraculously brought to acknowledge

the true God, and to publish decrees signifying there is no God besides. The heads of the second great monarchy are made instrumental in building the second temple at Jerusalem in testimony of their belief in the God of Israel, in opposition to the vain philosophy and theology of the magi and their worship of the two principles, as described in the preceding chapter. Alexander, the head of the *third*, is brought to Jerusalem, and by divine admonition is constrained, in the presence of his courtiers and to their utter astonishment, to fall down before the Jewish high priest and acknowledge him the priest of the true and only God. The *fourth*, or Roman empire, was but a preparation of the world for the crucifixion of the Messiah, and as a theatre for the preaching of the Gospel. Hence the coming of Jesus Christ, the promised seed of the woman, or the redemption of which Christ's advent is the most prominent feature, is the pivot on which the whole of this world's history turns. And this it is in defiance of the derision of infidels, and the slights of worldly-minded men, who treat it with the indifference of a mere casual adventitious circumstance.

“What do you consider the most remarkable in the ways of Providence?”

What has been beautifully styled ‘the hiding of the divine power.’ Every thing is done so that men of carnal minds can see nothing but the common

course of nature. The Israelites were expressly commanded to destroy the Canaanites ; but in other cases God has made different motives the spur for one nation destroying another. Thus the Americans, when the Spaniards went among them, were as abominably atrocious in their idolatry as the Canaanites. But avarice, and not the command or glory of God, was the motive power in the minds of the Spaniards. The same may be said of the spirit of commerce, which has opened out to the English the East Indies and the islands of the southern ocean, where idolatry reigns in all its horrors. Avarice leads the van, and the gospel follows in the rear ; but still the hand of divine Providence is as much there, as it was when Moses held up his hand and rod while Israel conquered Amalek. (Exodus xvii.)

“ What is your inference from the great plan of this world’s history being perfect in the divine mind, and embracing every individual’s history ? ”

The conviction, that all historical events are pre-ordained, will account for passive virtue being more meritorious in the sight of God than active ; and will go far to prove that man is more responsible for the secret depravity of his own heart, his thoughts, and motives, than for any influence his conduct or public actions may have on the destinies of mankind. The guiding of events is with the Almighty ; the depravity of a man’s heart, and

the moral turpitude of his actions, are of himself. Hence, there may be as wicked men, or men of as great moral guilt, in private life, where a man's actions have no influence beyond his own household and most limited circle, as those who have been accounted the arbiters of the fates of nations, and such monsters of iniquity that we are at a loss to conceive how God can sufficiently punish them. Your Neroes, your Dioclesians, Julians, Popes, Pizarros, and Buonapartes, were but passive instruments in His hand, who works all things according to his will. However knowledge of divine truth may spread over the face of the earth, there will always be a sufficiency of infidelity and wickedness among mankind to furnish instruments for the punishment of national guilt. No argument in favour of divine providence will ever be strong enough to damp the ardour of high vaulting ambition, or to check it in its successful and guilty career. But so little can we at any time perceive of the great eternal plan, that we may very justly be compared to a small insect upon the ponderous wheel of some stupendous engine, which has no conception of the extent of that individual wheel, much less of its connection with the whole machine.

4. "What is faith?"

It is belief in God as the Creator and Disposer of all events, whether natural or human, and the

Author of salvation, in opposition to that worldly spirit, which, though it tacitly believes in a creator, and disputes not in words his right to absolute sway in his own works, yet so acts as if self and expediency were the only deities of importance in this world.

“ Can you not define more comprehensively ? ”

Faith in the most extensive sense is equivalent to the allegiance due to God ; because it not only embraces the belief that he is, and also the rewarder of all who diligently seek him, but includes likewise *humility*, the reverse of that pride of spirit which predominates in the devil and all unbelievers. It also embraces hope and the assurance of divine favour, as well as the natural fruit of it, a zeal to maintain good works, not from any intrinsic value in themselves as meriting salvation, but from a love of God and a desire to be like him.

“ With what consistency do the articles of our church say, that works before grace, which do not spring of faith in Jesus Christ, have the nature of sin ? ”

Because they arise from *self-deification*, which is the sin of the devil, and directly the reverse of sound faith. If done by way of atonement for some sin, not in the spirit of restitution to an injured fellow-creature, and through repentance towards God, they are at best but a mere imputation

cast upon the divine wisdom and power in the economy of his great family ; as if Christ was not a sufficient atonement, and as if God needed assistance in alleviating the condition of those, the objects of our good works, or did not do all in the most perfect wisdom, since we think his works and ways capable of improvement by our meritorious services.

“ How has God dealt with mankind as to the exercise of their faith ? ”

As faith is the divine strength of the soul, the link which fastens it to God, the root of obedience, or that by which the whole of true in opposition to all false religion is designated, he has, as it were, been always studious of throwing his champions into such situations as called forth the strength of their faith ; for faith without activity or works is dead. The Christian’s life is such a warfare as continually measures the strength of his faith. This is the miraculous hiding of God’s power ; that every person is, and that without ceasing, at the stretch of his faith, and yet perceives in his condition nothing beyond the common course of natural events.

“ What is your inference from God so trying the faith of his servants ? ”

We have a glimpse of the divine purpose in

this, in the opening of the book of Job. In all his works God will be justified, even in sight of man's great adversary. He appears to pardon no sin from mere compassion; for when Christ forgave sin, it was not from mere pity of the weakness of human nature, but always on account of faith; though that faith was evident to none but himself, who could read the thoughts of every heart. Satan is called the Accuser of the Brethren, and we may consider him as always demanding fair play, and that every individual of the human race may be thoroughly tried. It does not follow that there should be faith in the Redeemer as known to us,—this must ever be according to knowledge. The great touchstone is the pulling down of *self* in the sight of God. When this is perfectly done, there is perfect faith. And as salvation through Christ is the work of God, where faith is thus perfect, belief in Christ will be commensurate with knowledge. This vindicates the divine wisdom in making affliction the best school for heaven; for it is only on the bed of languishment, or in the depth of worldly despair, that self yields entirely to God. In health and prosperity even our good works, which we persuade ourselves are done in faith, are but too often mere incense to *self*. Self-applause is the grand incentive to many who are wishful to appear as burning and shining lights in the world.

5. "What do you mean by the Holy Trinity?"

That *threefold* relation in which the Deity is made known to us in the work of redemption. The word is a corruption of *tri-unity*, or three in one, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

"How do they operate in the work of redemption?"

The Father wills our happiness, or our restoration to his favour, the Son removes the obstacles, and the Holy Ghost operates with our spirit to bring it to pass.

"What do you consider the great difficulty in the doctrine of the Trinity, the mystery which seems to give offence to men of worldly minds?"

Men of carnal minds, who would have the rewards of a religious life, and yet will not sacrifice the heart and its affections to God, are desirous of some excuse, and have fixed upon the doctrine of the Trinity, which represents these three as forming but one Godhead, while it is affirmed that each has personality as if there were three Gods.

"And can you clear up this difficulty?"

Perhaps not to the conviction of carnal minds, because the very thing they struggle against is conviction, and nothing is farther from their desire; but I can say enough to satisfy the man of true religion.

“ How do you proceed ? ”

Upon analogy, as I have done in all the other attributes of the Deity. I find it in man, as being in the image and similitude of his Creator. He is a *trinity* of *will*, *word*, and *action*. But an empire with its three parts, legislature, established laws, and executive power, is the most apt.

“ Apply these to the Godhead as known to us in the Trinity ? ”

The Father, or divine will, I would compare to the legislature ; the Son or Word to the law going forth as its word ; and the Holy Ghost as the executive power which enforces the law.

“ And how have you personality in these ? ”

Each one, though its power is in the other two, is independent in act, as if a distinct person ; for the standing law, though the express image or substance of the will of the legislature, acts without referring on every occasion to know that will. It is the standing will. And the executive power vindicates or enforces the law as if by self-motion or personality. It does not wait for a new exertion of the will of the legislature.

“ But might not a human legislature decree contrary to the essence of the standing law or constitution ? ”

Certainly : but this would be its death blow ;

and is that against which all earthly legislatures particularly guard. God's own perfection ensures him against this, and this perfection is equally an attribute of the three persons. Hence the parallel still holds good. The omnipotence and omnipresence of each may be likewise traced; and it might be shewn, that what belongs to one belongs equally to all; for they do not admit of distinction of substance, though they do of action; but individuality of action is *personality*. In this analogy the idea of a set of physical agents must be excluded. As, therefore, the standing law is the will of the legislature, and the legislature's power is commensurate with the empire, and is every where present; so the law may be said to be in its bosom, though it goes forth or communicates with the executive power. And as the executive power proceeds from the legislature and the law, so the Holy Ghost is said to equally proceed from the Father and the Son.

“ When was the first revelation of the Trinity ?”

At the creation of man. ‘ *Let us make man.*’

And again at his fall. The second person, as the divine Logos, was always believed in by the Israelites as the angel of the covenant. Nor were the heathen nations without a notion of it: their Mercury was founded upon it. The Celtic and Gothic nations, as well as the Greeks, had the

winged messenger of the gods, and an elevated place near each temple on which to alight.

“ But this only sets him forth as the Word or Logos ; how is he called the son ? ”

From his being ‘ the seed of the woman ’ without the co-operation of man.

“ Do you suppose this personality originated with the work of redemption ? ”

By no means : it existed from eternity and was equally displayed in the creation.

“ How ? ”

The goodness of God wills the existence of creatures to enjoy happiness ; the Word, the express image of the will, goes forth to create ; and the Holy Ghost operates the creation into existence.

“ If Jesus Christ, or the second person of the Trinity, is omnipresent as the image of the divine will, power, and wisdom, how do you account for his presence upon earth ? ”

When Christ was combating the enemy in human nature, he was no less present in the divine works. Such expressions as ‘ I came to do my Father’s will and not my own,’ and ‘ I go to my Father,’ are adapted chiefly to his human nature.

The quelling of a riot, it may be observed, in one corner of an empire, by no means suspends the beneficial influence of the established laws in another, where the people are living in the most profound peace, content, and harmony.

"Are you aware that infidels affirm, that on the admission of the incarnation, the end has not answered the means, and that the divine will is frustrate?"

I am perfectly aware of this device as well as of many others. Truth is the object of their most rancorous malice, and that against which their enmity is entrenched. To be convicted of error is to be conquered; when the power is broken, but the pride remains as high-crested and as unbending as ever. The plan of salvation was devised by infinite wisdom. It is in the hands of a mediator. It has been equally fulfilling since the fall of man. To assume that it is a new thing, commencing with the advent of Christ, and that we should expect any thing more than a casual glimpse, are equally absurd. We know little of our own nature. We know less of God; and therefore know but in part of this great and extensive plan. And little as true believers know, the infidel knows much less. For such is the will of God, that to the mind at enmity with him, his plan of salvation appears foolishness. He permits them to involve themselves in strong delusion that

they should believe a lie. Believers from humanity may lament their case, but since all are equally in the hands of God, equally fulfilling the divine will and purpose, they ought to leave obstinate unbelievers to his righteous judgments, who, in his infinite wisdom, employs them as instruments with the devil in blowing up the fiery furnace of affliction, in which it is his will that his most favoured servants should be prepared for his divine glory.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PERSONAL HISTORY OF JESUS CHRIST.

1. "What is your chief aim in the present chapter?"

To shew that according to a promise made four thousand years before, and continually renewed 'at sundry times and in divers manners', a Divine Personage assumed the human nature, and did and suffered all that was expected of him both according to the above plan of redemption, and all that had been prophesied of him in words, or pre-figured of him in types.

"And how did he assume our nature?"

By being born of a pure virgin, without the co-operation of man, as had been intimated when, at the fall of man, redemption was first promised; for the promise is included in the denunciation of the Tempter's punishment, 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and *her seed*: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.'

"What do you infer from the assumption of our nature without the co-operation of man?"

1. A justification of womankind from the guilt of having been the first in the transgression, or the one who first brought sin into the world: for she not only led the way, but was instrumental in seducing her husband. Her condition, therefore, has ever been greatly inferior to man's, her wretchedness always in a twofold degree. But the honour of introducing the Saviour into the world, independent of man, shews with what an eye of tenderness the Creator regards her. The very helplessness of her case in child bearing is promised as an atonement for that guilt which she incurred more than man in the original transgression.

2. It points out that allurement by which Adam fell. Hence, as Magee asserts, child-bearing is a sin, because in the Mosaic institutions piacular sacrifices are appointed. Every man born in the common course of nature partakes of Adam's corrupt nature, the original sin. But Christ was not so brought into the world; he was of the same nature of Adam before the fall, without sin, and so he continued.

“Are you aware how infidels sneer at what they call the absurdity of God becoming man?”

Yes, I am well aware that they first create difficulties and then place them in an absurd light, with the avowed intention of getting rid of the

subject by a sneer. But is this acting like honest men? When the subject is properly stated, every part of it is the very reverse of absurd. It is highly probable, solemn, and awful: it is more, it is truth itself.

“Let me hear you state it.”

To do so I must refer to the creation of the human race. And in doing so, shall first inquire of *what* and *how* man was first created. “The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of *life* (or *lives* temporal and eternal) and man became a living (ever living) soul.” In this account are two original parts of human nature, the *dust* of the ground and the *breath* of life.

“What of the *first* part, the dust of the ground?”

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”. The word rendered “created”, means “created from nothing”. Man’s material part, therefore, was made from that dust of the ground which the Lord God had made from nothing. From first to last, then, it is, if we may not call it the substance, the production of the Lord God. And as to the rational and immortal part, the Lord God *breathed* it, breathed it *from himself*; this is its origin. Man, therefore, body and soul, is the

workmanship and substance of the Lord God: and in a far more intimate sense than any article of manufacture is said to be the workmanship of man, or a child the substance of its parents.

"This seems plain enough; but who is the Lord God?"

In the conclusion of the last chapter I have shewn what we understand by the Trinity. In this place we have all the persons of the Godhead; each person separately, and all conjointly *is*, or *are* the Lord God. With respect to the words Lord God, *Jehovah Elohim*, it must be remembered that the first and chief purpose of Moses was to guard the Israelites against belief in the Great Father of the Heathens, by whom they were surrounded. Previously to the writing of this, it had been answered to him at the burning bush, when inquiring by what name God would be called, since the names by which he had been known to the forefathers of mankind, were at that time applied to the false Gods, "I AM THAT I AM," or *Jehovah*. This name implies *existence*, or *spiritual essence*, distinct from matter in whatever form. Now, every name of the Heathen gods, besides referring to the original name of the Deity, had attached to it some form or attribute of matter, as taken from their *Pantheistic* history of the Great Father. But Jehovah was simple, and

void of all idea even of the incarnation : because the *incarnate* God, the *redeeming* and *helping* God, were titles of the creature, Noah, worshipped as the Creator.

“ From man being thus created by the Lord God, you will infer that God must be thoroughly acquainted with man’s nature ; to what purpose will you apply it ? ”

That when man fell by the instigation of the devil, the Lord God his creator best knew how to restore him and repair the damage. For since the Lord God could create man and breathe into his nostrils the breath of life, it was neither more difficult to do, nor is it more absurd to suppose, that when the first man who had been raised up the head of the human race, was set aside from bringing all his children to glory, another should be raised up from the seed of the woman by the same spirit, without the intervention of man.

“ I see no more difficulty ; but the testimony ? ”

‘ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him ’ (John i. 2). ‘ The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee ; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.’ (Luke i. 35). ‘ And the

Word was made flesh and dwelt among us ; and we beheld his glory the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' (John i. 14.)

"There is one other point I wish to be satisfied upon. You say there are three persons in the God-head, why, do you suppose, was the second incarnate rather than either of the other two ?"

As to the first, by it we understand Jehovah, or that essence which is all in all, who reigns enthroned in those eternal mansions which he inhabited before the creation. When we speak of the second, we understand the going forth of the mandate, the express image of the will of the first, to create worlds, beyond or extrinsic to the mansions of eternal glory ; and this mandate or Word is accompanied by the third person or Holy Ghost, the acting power. These are co-essential and co-eternal with the Father ; but they are not the Father, who reigns in eternal glory apart from his works, though they do all in his name and power, nor are they mere emanations any more or less than the standing law and executive power are emanations, and not the abstract substance or constitution, of an empire. And since the law or word is that which directs, and the Spirit is that which works, and as God's law or word was that which Adam broke and Christ was to renew, it is hence evident enough why the second person took our nature, more especially because his word was

to be a rule of life. But then, though we say that the Word was made flesh, we also allow at the same time that the Spirit was with him to work miracles. And while Christ has our nature with him in heaven, the Holy Ghost has his mansion also in the heart of every true believer.

“But do you not suppose there is a difficulty in conceiving how man’s nature is united with the divine; how the Word became flesh?”

Should we conceive it changed in substance or blended, there is undoubtedly a difficulty. But this it is not; we neither admit of change nor confusion of substance. We only understand that as at first he *breathed* into man’s body, which body he himself had created from nothing, so he brought this nature back again into more immediate contact with himself. And this we suppose he has done by taking our nature in the womb of the virgin, and wherewith he now sits at the right hand of God. If we would have analogy and similitude, the soul of every virtuous man is called the temple of the Holy Ghost, and in the same manner is the human nature of Christ the temple of his divinity, not that it comprehends his infinitude any more than man’s soul comprehends that of the Holy Spirit.

“Christ himself used the expression, ‘If I be lifted up on high, I will draw all men unto me’; what

inference do you draw from this when viewed in connection with what you have been saying?"

That Christ is the centre of attraction to the spiritual world or human nature; and that at the consummation of this world's history, all mankind will be ranged in perfect and beauteous order by this attraction, according to their advance in the life of faith. And should analogy be sought for in the material world, it exists in perfection in the attraction of gravitation and chemical affinity, which is that same band to the substance which the Lord God created from nothing when he made the world, as Jesus Christ and his Holy Spirit are to that breath of life which the Lord God breathed into man when man first became a living soul.

"How do you account for men being apparently so unwilling to believe in the incarnation?"

Human nature is corrupt from the original taint of our first parents. The natural man is at enmity with God. Men are equally unwilling to believe that God's eye is ever upon them observing and registering every thought and the motives of all their actions. They first figure to themselves a Supreme Being, as above stated of the first person of the Trinity, and pretend that he there reigns in sovereign contempt of the human race, leaving each man to be a god unto himself. When this is done, they with great self-complacency pretend how absurd it is to suppose God, that is, such a

God as they make him, to be thus intimately connected with poor human nature !

“ What notion had the Patriarchs of the incarnation ?”

They all lived in faith of it. To Abraham the promise was remarkably renewed. Job, who probably lived about the same period with Abraham, believed that his Redeemer should stand at the latter day upon the earth. But if this was his faith in the resurrection of the body, still it shews that he had right notions of the Redeemer’s office. Besides, the whole history of mankind, the whole race of men and women who either now live or ever have lived, are vouchers for the facts that man fell, and that the human race have received the promise, and have lived in the faith of a divine personage repairing what the first pair of the race had done amiss. The Heathens no less than the Jews believed in an *incarnate* God. Nor, while the Roman Jupiter is remembered in the world, will this be forgotten. The Heathen mythology, the gods and goddesses, the demi-gods and genii, all prove the expectation of Christ’s advent and the immortality of the soul.

“ Of what nature is the testimony of the Israelitish nation which you say was expressly set apart for the purpose ?”

In their history, as set forth in the bible, we

have it in beauteous order from the divine hand, the source of all perfection. The whole apparatus of the Jewish priesthood and national polity prefigured Christ. All was as perfectly preparative to his advent as the collecting of materials is to the erection of a house. In short, the whole race of mankind is all so fashioned and moulded in historical order, as to be but the limbs of one great body whose head is Christ. From him all the members ramify, whether represented by the vital organs as connected with the material world, or the sensitive and intellectual as typifying the spiritual. And the age is fast advancing when all will be seen in this its true light. The whole will appear to be built up a spiritual edifice in Christ the head of the church. One stone to honour and another to a less distinguished station; some to dishonour, and others to be cast away as rubbish, but which at one time seemed as necessary in the process as those the most distinguished.

2. "Are you aware of the infidel's sneer respecting the reputation of the Virgin Mary?"

Yes: but it needs little comment. The Great Mother of heathen mythology testifies how precisely the event was foretold. It may be observed that the great enemy of mankind always sneered at it too. Because, as pride is his besetting sin, the humility of Christ, in this respect, was the object of his ridicule; and so it continues to be of

his children. But as God confounds the wisdom of the wise, so the devil was outwitted in this event: for the humility of Christ is what grinds his pride to dust.

“Where have you the first intimation of the virgin mother?”

In the text already cited, Gen. iii. 15. In reference to this, Eve is represented at the birth of Cain as exclaiming ‘I have gotten a man from the Lord, or, the man the Lord’. Which may be the meaning, it matters little; she evidently supposed him the promised seed; and considering her anxiety for repairing the damage she had caused, and her inexperience, he being the first child that was ever born, her mistake was natural and excusable. But the worship of the great mother in the heathen world, who was always represented as bringing forth the great father, while as yet she remained a virgin, proves that Noah and his immediate posterity, had right notions of the virgin mother of Christ.

“Whence does the Romish church derive the divine honours paid the virgin mother?”

Most undoubtedly from the heathens. I have already stated that the Christian doctrines of the Greek church were engrafted on, or supplanted the more simple worship of the great father, viewed as the incarnate God, symbolized as a con-

templative old man; while the church of Rome engrafted them upon the more complicated system of image worship, embracing that of the great mother, each heathen God became a saint, and the Virgin Mary usurped the divine honours of the great mother.

“Have you any intimation in Scripture of the Virgin Mary being any thing more than a mere woman?”

None whatever. In no part of inspired Scripture is she spoken of as more holy than other holy women. The first salutation is, ‘Hail, highly favoured! The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women.’ But there is no hint of any superiority, more than that of reputation for the high honour of being chosen, because she was holy and perfectly virtuous. Neither, on the other hand, is there any shadow of imposture.

3. “On the admission that the personage called Jesus Christ was in reality born in Judea as related in the New Testament, and according to the types and prophecies, are you prepared to prove him such from a review of his personal history?”

Yes: I find enough in his history to satisfy every inquirer, that he not only fulfilled all, but even outwent all that was prefigured. There is enough to place him far above all other men, princes, priests, prophets, benefactors, and so forth;

and amply sufficient to identify him with that beneficent God who created man. But then, let it be remembered that he was not sent to convict men against their wills. Faith was still faith, in his presence as well as with us ; and the " hiding of the divine power " was as much in the person of Jesus Christ as in any act of divine Providence. There was no halo of glory, nor any mark to distinguish him from other men. If there was any bodily distinction, it was, that he was a man of sorrows ; and men as it were hid their faces from him, rather than sought his presence from either gracefulness of person or splendour of appearance.

" What have you to say of what we may call the human character of Christ ? "

He came as much to set us an example in discipline for the future state, as to give us a rule of conduct. Considered as a human being, there never was a flaw discovered, even by his enemies, in his personal conduct. He was holy, harmless, separate from sinners ; void of offence towards God and man. He never was accused of either levity or mirth ; neither of the omission of duties nor of the commission of trespasses. But on the contrary, his life was replete with every benevolent purpose, and was a continued chain of active virtues. He was the only man who ever passed

through this life without sin ; and the crown of his perfection was his perfect freedom from pride. Now pride, or self-exaltation against God is the besetting sin of human nature ; that taint which Adam left us, and which was communicated to him by the devil at the Fall, and is that which grows stronger and the more intense the deeper any one is involved in guilt.

“ But then you said above, that he was of the same nature as Adam before the Fall ? ”

Certainly, or his human nature could not have been of that immaculate purity as to be fit to enter his Father’s presence. It could not have been the veil of righteousness, under which to shield the whole human nature, or link it to the divine nature.

“ What act do you instance as that which the most strikingly asserts his high descent ? ”

When God had created Adam and Eve, he first blessed them, and the first command he gave them was, to *increase* and *multiply* and *replenish* the earth ; and when he had saved Noah and his family from the Deluge, he repeated the blessing and command in the same words. The happiness and the increase of mankind were therefore the first wish and concern of the Creator. The first public act of Jesus Christ in the character of the

Redeemer, was by his presence to sanction the holy institution of matrimony. And not only this, but at the expense of a miracle, and the very first he wrought, to honour the institution and insure the present happiness of the bridegroom, who might otherwise have been unhappy in not having a sufficiency of wine to maintain the honour of the feast. This at once vindicates God's especial regard to the holy rites of matrimony, and identifies Jesus Christ with the beneficent Creator.

4. "Why does God look with such an especial eye of complacency upon the marriage institution?"

Because, when he created Adam and Eve, he left them to increase mankind without any further interference of his divine power in express acts of creation. He implanted a powerful instinct in man's nature to ensure it. As he left it the only means of peopling the world, the greatest sin next to murder, is, to gratify this instinct with the known intention of the non-production of children, and with the especial wish to avoid the encumbrance they bring. It is the Creator's will that the earth be cultivated and filled with inhabitants; but strong as the instinct is, the earth has never yet been filled to one tenth degree which it would bear in a cultivated state. Through the non-compliance with this command, and the obstinate depravity of mankind, the divine will is frustrate, and this is

the foundation of God's wrath against all gratifications not sanctioned by marriage.

"What have you to remark on the first institution of marriage?"

It is the only instance in which we find God, as it were, improving his work on second thought. The only time he seemed not perfectly satisfied with his own ordination was, when he saw man alone, and without a help-meet. He had pronounced all his other works *good*; now, he says, 'it is *not* good for man to be alone.'

"And how did he remedy this evil?"

Not as a common workman would have done; by making a female, as in the case of the brute creation, from the earth, and as he had made man, and by a second breathing; but by taking a part of the living substance from man, that the connexion might be more near and endearing than it otherwise would have been.

"But how does this apply to other men?"

It might be maintained that the first woman being thus of the substance of the first man, every individual woman is a part of every individual man: but the text goes on to say, for *this cause* shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be one flesh. The conjugal rite, therefore, is that which unites

man and woman and makes them as much one flesh as were Adam and Eve.

“ How do you extricate yourself from the labyrinth of promiscuous concubinage ? ”

Before a second marriage occurred was the fall of man. But in the antediluvian world, even in the wicked posterity of Cain, we have only one instance on record of a plurality of wives ; one solitary instance of a breach of the marriage institution. Observation, however, will soon satisfy us, that were men strictly confined in desire and act to one woman, the ‘one flesh’ would be manifested by the ‘one heart and mind,’ in opposition to that disunion which so scandalously characterizes the marriages of all those notorious for transgressing this rule !

“ What proof have you that it is the will of God that one man should have but one wife ? ”

We have ample proof from both natural and revealed religion. When God created the first progenitors of the race, he made but one male and one female ; when he saved Noah and his family from the Deluge, there were four males and only four females. And the laws of nature have always been such as to maintain this equality of numbers, for the numbers of males and females born every year are very nearly equal. Should one man therefore have a plurality of wives, another whose

natural right is equal, must go without. Also that each man should be bound to one woman is the most productive of happiness, both to the female sex and to children as well as to the man himself. It is the will of God that mankind should increase and multiply, and it is always found that the most children are produced, and the population increases the most rapidly, where the marriage institution is the most respected. That a man therefore should never know but one woman is evidently the will of God.

“What do you conceive was the leading idea in the divine mind in thus producing the first woman, when one created from the dust, like Adam, might have answered the same purpose?”

Had it been the intention of the Creator, that men like oxen in a wide meadow should luxuriate and fatten, lie down to sleep and rise to eat and play, till death shut the scene in eternal oblivion, this would have done very well. But with man, the Creator’s design was far otherwise. Man alone, of all the creatures which God had made, was created after God’s own image and similitude. He alone received the breath of *lives*; he alone was designed for eternal glory in God’s own presence: and, to invigorate hope and to assist him in the work of fitting himself for that glory, to irradiate the gloom of this lower world, he is indulged with the possession of a creature, in whose

society, and in it alone, is there a glimpse of that mutual benevolence which those in immortal glory experience. Friendship between man and man may be great, it may soar above all other earthly enjoyments ; but it is very different from that joy experienced by a virtuous pair whose hearts never elsewhere stray.

5. "What proof have you of Christ's divinity ?"
Miracles.

"What are miracles ?"

A miracle is an act of Divine Providence, beyond the common course of nature, but not in contradiction to it.

"Explain what you mean by beyond, but not in contradiction ?"

Should I see water become wine, a man walk upon the sea as on dry land ; the sea and the winds in a storm hushed at a man's bidding, and the dead raised to life at a man's word : I would say these are beyond nature, because no man in the common course of nature can do such things ; but then, I would not say they reverse nature, for in reality none of nature's laws are contradicted. The basis of wine is water, so that at least five sixths are pure water ; and of the remaining one sixth, five parts of it out of six are the elements of water ; a little carbon and the metallic base of potass are

foreign. Nature in the act of making wine uses thus much of water. Christ, the author of nature, therefore, in the first miracle that he wrought in Cana of Galilee did not contradict himself. He only made wine without the intervention of the tree, the earth, and solar heat. Walking on the sea might be by rendering the water stable, which is no more than nature does in the absence of heat. All the miracles tended to prove him the God of nature, one who knew how to perfect her laws, and had the power and will to do so ; they shewed him to be goodness itself without any share of evil.

“ What do you consider as a criterion to determine between real and pretended miracles ? ”

All real miracles are in the course of nature, or are an expansion of the divine goodness in favour of virtue and in the punishment of wickedness ; proving that the Author of nature either suspends nature’s laws or exerts them to an unwonted degree. Pretended miracles do not strictly adhere to this. Real miracles were wrought in times when divine interference was needed, God being the judge and receiving the glory ; pretended, when man was to reap the glory.

“ What do you conceive to be the most prominent feature in the history of Christ’s miracles ? ”

That he did not come on earth to work miracles : but being come, the divine power broke from him,

or through his human nature, like occasional gleams of sunshine in a cloudy sky.

“ And what the purpose ?”

The leading purpose, perhaps, next to the exercise of the divine attribute *goodness*, was the balance of faith : to give so much evidence as God considers adjusted to the freedom of man’s will.

“ What have you to say of the judgment, if I may use the expression, displayed in the choice of these miracles ; for you will allow that if Christ performed these miracles, he might have done others in addition or instead of them ? ”

The miracles which Christ wrought, whether so designed or not, prove these three things. 1. That he was Lord of nature. 2. The Lord of human nature, or of the quick and the dead. 3. That he possessed absolute power over the fallen angels, or the empire of Satan, and was in daily converse with the invisible world.

“ Can you enlarge on these ? ”

1. He is Lord of the vegetable kingdom, he changes water into wine, augments the food of a few to satisfy thousands, and blasts the barren fig tree. He is Lord of the mineral kingdom and the elements, he changes water into wine, stills the raging of the tempest, and walks upon the sea. He is Lord of the animal kingdom as is proved by

the miraculous draughts of fishes, and the one that brought the tribute money to Peter. These shew the power was with him which created them all. 2. He is the same who formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into him the breath of life ; as was proved by his so repeatedly finishing what nature had left imperfect, by giving sight to the blind and by healing all kinds of infirmities ; and by recalling the breath of lives to certain bodies which it had quitted. These shew him equally Lord of the living and the dead, and his own resurrection proves him Lord of the general resurrection. 3. He gave many and varied proofs of his power over devils ; not only by his imposing on them silence, but by constraining them to confess who he was, and by compelling them to obey his commands. And the angels which ministered unto him and attended him on various occasions, as well as his conference with Moses and Elias, shew that he was in daily communion with the invisible world. Instead, therefore, of repining at the scanty materials of faith, we ought to praise God for his liberal supply, for no reasonable doubt was left, that with this his human nature was the divine power which created the world.

6. " Since you say Jesus Christ came to wrest man from the devil, and to vindicate the divine wisdom in human nature's powers, when came they first into conflict ? "

When Jesus was about thirty years of age, had been baptized, and had received the necessary accessions of strength by the descent of the Holy Ghost; and his titles had been proclaimed from heaven, ‘this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.’ Then was he led up to be tempted by the devil.

“What do you suppose was the aim of Christ’s temptations, for you must allow the Evangelists have given us very slight accounts of them?”

They perhaps knew little more of them than what they have related. To have entered philosophically into their history, they must have partially drawn aside the veil which hides the invisible world. They, any more than ourselves, did not fully comprehend the nature of the devil and the extent of his power. They knew not the peculiar condition of the human race, as being his empire; nor how in every respect Christ was to despoil him of it. The chief aim seems to be, a vindication of human nature, or rather of the divine wisdom in making it as it is, with respect to the ease or otherwise of its being won by the devil, its being pushed on with so much facility to every degree of wickedness and rebellion against God; and, finally, after a vindication of this kind, to shew that with as perfect justice as if the devil had never prevailed, God may restore man to favour.

“ And how did Christ’s temptations in the wilderness bear upon all this ? ”

He is first represented as fasting forty days ; and in this extremity of hunger resisting the temptation to obtain food improperly. The most plausible excuse of Eve might be, her desire of food, excited by the sight of the forbidden fruit. But whether or not, it is well known that to the majority of mankind a great temptation arises from the desire of food to satisfy the cravings of nature ; or of more piquant food and drink to stimulate a depraved appetite ; or, what may be called the miser’s curse, the dread of starving at some future day. The Saviour’s resisting the appetite of a forty days’ fast, seems to vindicate this part, sometimes called the weakness of human nature. But then, this was only the human part of the temptation ; the divine was the resistance to the urgency of the tempter to exert his divine power and supply his wants, in which, had the devil succeeded, he would have got the victory.

“ What was the second temptation ? ”

It was founded on self-preservation. The tempter is represented as taking him to the highest pinnacle of the temple, and urging him either to prove his divinity by throwing himself down to see whether the angels of God were in readiness to fulfil what had been prophesied of him, or to flatter his vanity by a safe descent in the sight of

the people around the temple. The apostle says nothing of his being actually threatened with personal harm ; but the aim seems to be to teach us that however great our personal danger may be, it will not authorize us to do evil that good may come ; neither that we should presumptuously expose ourselves, and then expect divine interference.

“ What have you to say of the third, wherein the tempter shewed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and offered them all as the price of worshipping him ? ”

That though pomps and vanities, worldly grandeur and possessions, are the most powerful temptations, still they are not irresistible. That they are the most powerful, the devil himself shewed in this instance ; for the desire of food was only to tempt Christ to assert his divine power, equivalent perhaps to our repining against God. Personal safety, or the second, to a presumptuous appeal to divine aid. But the third was to be an act of rebellion by a traitorous transfer of allegiance to an inveterate enemy.

“ Before you proceed further I should like to interpose one question. What is your notion of Christ’s power in these temptations ? If his divine power was embarked, I see no great merit ; if only his human, of what extent was it ? ”

It may be observed that Christ displayed no

power over the devil, either in acts of expulsion or in working any miracles, till he had repulsed him in the above temptations. I certainly do not think his divine power was now engaged, nor am I prepared to say I fully comprehend the extent of his human power. His bitter cry in his last agonies favours the idea that his human nature alone was then in the conflict: but that his divine nature was embarked in the miracles and prophecies, is evident enough. All the miracles of the Old Testament and those of the apostles were expressly worked in the name of the Lord Jehovah and the Lord Christ; and every prediction was prefaced with 'Thus saith the Lord'. But Christ did all in his own name, saying 'I and my Father are one.'

"How did the devil proceed during the rest of Christ's ministry?"

He looked on in sullen dismay, and saw his empire falling like lightning from heaven, till the last grand struggle, when permission was given him to try the Saviour to the uttermost.

"What do you consider the aim of the last trial or temptation?"

It was undoubtedly a power granted the enemy of mankind to try the Saviour till he himself was satisfied of fair-play. We may paint to ourselves a repetition of the scene which preceded Job's

trials : for God must and will be justified. With respect to the Saviour, it was a thorough sifting of his whole composition. The whole process was artfully contrived to plumb every depth and lurking place of the soul for vanity and pride. Had any been therein, it would have been brought out in some vindictive anger, some desire of vengeance, some hint or ostentatious display of a power if he chose to exert it, by which he could deliver himself; but nothing appeared, and he was victorious.

“ What was it with respect to the devil ? ”

Undoubtedly, along with the hopes of victory, he had a secret satisfaction, as in the case of Job, in the personal suffering and corporeal pain of the Redeemer. Malignity against the welfare of the human race, pure misanthropy, is the chief attribute of the devil. While he urged on the Jews, no doubt he was flushed with the hopes of victory ; for he might well deem it no small success to have so exalted a personage in his empire of the grave and death. But in this he was outwitted, for if Christ was put to death in the flesh, he was quickened by the Spirit. It was now that he first perceived he had brought in the spoiler who would lead both him and *this* his captivity captive. Like Sampson with the gates of Gaza, Christ carried away the barriers of the grave and gave all

the inmates the assurance that they should hereafter go free.

“ And what with respect to mankind ? ”

That in whatever circumstances they approach death, the approach is terrible, for even the Redeemer approached it in agonies of terror ; and the only way to make it less so, is a previous life of preparation ; so as to make him our friend, who thus made the breach upon the empire of death, and will hereafter completely break it up and carry it away.

CHAPTER VIII.

REDEMPTION.

1. “ You say that Christ was put to death in the flesh, but was quickened by the Spirit; that he was included in the empire of death and the grave, but that, Sampson-like with the gates of Gaza, he escaped in triumph: what do you call the place whither he went, this empire of Satan or Death ? ”

It is sometimes called the *Intermediate State*, as being the abode of the departed souls till the general resurrection. It is that prefigured by the abode of Noah in the ark, and that alluded to by our Saviour in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus: for the Jews were accustomed to distinguish it as a regaining of Paradise; and as Abraham was the head of their nation, they called the portion of it set apart for his true children ‘ Abraham’s Bosom.’

“ Do you suppose that the parable of the rich man and Lazarus is a revelation of the true nature of the intermediate state ? ”

No: it may be so. But our Saviour only spake according to the prejudices of the Jews. He knew they were accustomed to think thus of the state of

the departed immediately after death. His aim was to establish the certainty of a future state with rewards and punishments, not to reveal its natural history. The same may be said of his answer to the penitent thief on the cross. He spoke to him according to his notions of the future state, to comfort him and to assure him of its reality, but not to enlighten mankind concerning its nature.

“ What inference do you draw from these passages respecting the intermediate state ? ”

That it is a state of consciousness, of positive pleasure or pain, in opposition to those who allow an intermediate state, but affirm it to be a state of unconscious sleep.

“ What arguments do they advance to reconcile us to the cheerless thought of passing so many thousands of years in such a waste of existence ? ”

That as there is no consciousness, the moment of death and that of the general resurrection will appear one and the same ; and therefore there can be no loss.

“ But as the resurrection is to be a resurrection of the body, the future state after the resurrection will be something of a corporeal existence, though glorified ; in what state is the soul with respect to its activity while the body is dust and ashes ? ”

This is the empire of Satan and Death. The soul is represented as in prison. Whatever its state may be, it is a consciousness of thraldom, and an ardent longing for release at the general resurrection. Whatever its energies may be, they are cramped, like those of the body in sleep ; and therefore this state is sometimes spoken of as a state of sleep.

“ What have you to say of the locality of the intermediate state ? ”

∴ The Jews and heathens imagined it to be the Paradise which Adam lost ; and the latter mythologically the place whither Noah retired during his abode in the ark, as well as the top of Ararat, whereon he landed. Not having correct notions of the figure of the earth, they imagined the sun and moon went to this happy region during night. Hence, to go to this place of felicity, was to descend through the doors of the grave, or through a sacred cave, the mystic passage to the other world. But as to its real locality, we know no more of it than of the eternal mansions of glory. Enough was said in Chapter I. to shew there is in *Infinity* room enough for it. But as to the whereabouts we have no occasion to concern ourselves, for it is with God, and he is sufficient for all.

“ What was the general notion of the heathen

world, as prophetical of Christ's descent into the intermediate state?"

They all had an idea of some hero-god, such as Hercules and Odin, descending into the invisible world, and striking some blow at its tyrant; as Christ himself did as soon as human nature was safe by the seal of death.

"What view do you take of that remarkable passage in the first Epistle of St. Peter (iii. 18, 19.), 'Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit; by which he also went and *preached* to the spirits in prison'?"

If Christ descended into the empire of death, and gave proof and an earnest that he would hereafter lead Satan's captivity captive, that is, set all his prisoners at liberty, we must suppose that his presence would be known to these inmates,—the souls of the departed. It must to them have been glad tidings; a preaching of the Gospel. But it also seems to refer to some peculiar boon to those destroyed in the general deluge.

2. "When you say that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, do you mean that he took his soul from the intermediate state, or his body from the grave?"

Both. He redeemed his own body from the grave, reunited it with his soul; and thus, his

human nature being joined to his divine, he there-with ascended to the presence of the Father.

“ What inference do you draw from Christ’s re-surrection with our nature ? ”

That we, if true disciples, in due course of time shall likewise rise, body and soul, and be received into glory, in the same perfection as if neither we nor Adam had ever offended.

“ Do you suppose we shall rise with the same body which we now possess ? ”

The matter of which our bodies are now composed, I look upon as no more a part of ourselves than the food we may eat to-morrow, some of which will then become our bodily substance. Personal identity is independent of matter. That we shall have a body of glorified matter from this world, seems certain ; but there is no need that it should contain one particle of the matter now in our composition, any more than it should contain the wrinkles of old age or the marks of disease. The soul will be every thing. By that same Spirit which breathed it at the creation, and which quickened Christ and raised him from the dead, it will be clothed with a body, according to its condition with respect to its state of grace and religious perfection. The body will be the index of an openly declared conscience, the seal of judgment. That our Saviour should rise with the

identical material body, is evident enough ; or how could his disciples have been assured of his resurrection ?

3. "What do you mean by Jesus Christ being set down at the right hand of God?"

1. The rest signified by the act of sitting, shews that he is released from the toil in the work of redemption. 2. That he holds the first station of honour in heaven : no created Being coming so near to the divine presence as his human nature, which is more intimately assumed than any other created nature.

"What benefit do we derive from Christ's ascension to the right hand of God?"

He is now become our Intercessor, our Great High Priest, typified by the Jewish high priest who entered once a year into the holy of holies ; every part of whose office prefigured some corresponding part of the Redeemer's history.

"How do you suppose Christ intercedes?"

Not by actual prayer, but by the presence of his human nature, which has triumphed over the devil, and now serves as a glorious temple prefigured by that of Jerusalem. This is the avenue between human nature in general and the throne of God ; so that it is an effectual barrier against Satan's approach, the accuser of the brethren. It

is also the true head of Christ's church on earth, whence he views every individual of the human species; and it is that veil under which he will screen the fallen nature of all his faithful followers.

"Do you suppose that the blood of Christ was different from other human blood, that so much efficacy was ascribed to it in the work of redemption?"

If we refer to the matter of which it was composed, it did not at all differ. But as the Jews were accustomed to set so high a value on their sacrifices, they in the end considered them efficacious *per se*, and not as types, deriving their efficacy from faith in the promised Messiah. Hence a value was imputed to the blood of bulls and goats, as doing what Christ alone, the substance to these shadows, does. And some Christians, erring in the same manner, view the material blood of Christ, as if every drop and particle of it possessed a divine efficacy and even a divinity. On this error Transubstantiation is founded. That this doctrine, this engine of priestly power, is void of truth, is evident; for on the admission that bread and wine are in reality changed into Christ's true body and blood, they could have no more efficacy than the flesh and blood of bulls and goats, which, as the Apostle says, could never take away sin.

" In what, then, does the sacramental efficacy of Christ's blood consist ? "

When we speak of Christ's blood making an atonement and cleansing from sin, (setting aside the ideas of the Mosaic institution,) we use the effect for the cause. Christ's blood, which means its shedding or his death, was the effect of his humility, in opposition to that pride which brought sin into the world. When we therefore speak of the efficacy of Christ's blood, his death, or his merits, and so forth, we mean his *obedience* and *perfect righteousness*, the effects of his *humility* or utter prostration of *self* before God.

" How then are these merits imputed to his followers ? "

Through faith. For there must be belief in his being and attributes, before there can be utter self-annihilation in his presence. And this faith must be both in God and in Christ; and then the obedience of Christ covers or absorbs the past disobedience of that faithful servant, blots it out or causes it to disappear. Hence God is justified before men and angels in pardoning that sinner. And the sinner himself, being thus clothed in the all perfect and therefore infinite righteousness of Christ, his own want of righteousness being supplied and the vacuity filled up, is made equal to being *just* or is *justified*. There is no-

thing remaining in that soul obnoxious to the wrath of God. And therefore, as if that man had never offended, God loves him as his own offspring. God is *propitiated* and *reconciled*, though Christ has all the merit, and is in truth the propitiation and reconciliation ; because through him all this was done : neither would nor could have been done without him. The wrath of God being now laid aside, and all enmity being purged out of man's heart, God and man are at *one* again. The *at-one-ment* is made, and man is saved through the blood of Christ.

4. "What have you to say of the sacraments?"

Each consists of the outward sign and the inward divine efficacy on the soul. A sacrament is tantamount with a covenant. The pivot on which it turns is faith. Every covenant which God made was on the performance of a condition apparently inadequate as a means. But in this is the hiding of the divine power. Adam could not, otherwise than by faith, discover any reason why he should refrain from the fruit of one particular tree. He wavered in faith, and fell through disobedience. So likewise, in the sacrifice, Abel had faith, but Cain could see no connection between slaying an animal and the pardon of his own sins. Noah in building the ark, and in offering the first sacrifice after the Flood, and Abraham in the circumcision, and Moses in the sabbatical institution, were faith-

ful and obedient ; but in each case the evidence of reason was in opposition to faith. Worldly-minded men see no connection between dipping in, or sprinkling with water, eating bread and drinking wine, and being made partakers of the merits of Christ. Each case is a trial of faith. God will prove mankind in *his* way, and not in *our* way. He will confound the wisdom of the wise, and chooses not that men should gain heaven by doing some great thing, some act of pride, but by *humility*, in shewing obedience in what man is pleased to call little things.

“ What is Baptism ? ”

It is the admission into Christ’s Church by the laver of regeneration. In other words, as the Deluge purged the old world of its polluted inhabitants, saving Noah, a righteous seed, for a new life in a new world, so baptism purges away sin, sometimes called the Old Man, and saves a seed, from which to raise up the New Man to newness of life.

“ On what does the argument of the new birth at baptism, and of the Anabaptist question, turn ? ”

On the very erroneous notion some men have of the present and future state of the soul. One party affirm that man in the present state is utterly void of any thing good ; and that there are in the future state but two distinctions. A chosen few go to heaven, and all the rest are swept to hell.

The sheep are divided from the goats ; and here they suppose the matter ends in eternity. Now these tenets are the origin of almost all sectarian disputes. According to them, the new birth cannot take place till there is adult age and thorough repentance ; and then that person is safe, ready sealed up for heaven, and cannot fall away from this state of grace. Should this repentance not take place, he is thoroughly reprobate, and goes to the left. Infant baptism, therefore, can have no efficacy. In short, baptism is not a sacrament ; repentance or man's own work is all ; or all depends on God's partiality in the work of predestination and election.

" But take the other view of the present and future state."

Man, according to the Articles of the established church, 'is very far gone from original righteousness ;' but he is not utterly gone, any more than the old world was utterly gone, since there was righteous Noah in it. Every man has something in him, if not equal, at least not much inferior to the less meritorious parts of the best of men. Nay, there is often a charitable disposition in the most abandoned, that would put to the blush many a self-exalted saint. Now, suppose every act of virtue has its reward, and every act of self-justification in the sight of God and men dims a ray of future glory ; and as the drowning of the old

world and the saving of righteous Noah was a type of baptism, and the old world a figure of man's state by nature before baptism,—we shall infer, that as Noah and his family were but eight persons, and have been increasing ever since, and yet in them the human race was effectually saved, so in infant baptism the new birth is effectual, though the new creature may be as small as the human race was when the arkite family was its whole. By baptism, the waters of the Spirit are let in upon this remaining good seed. It may increase like a grain of mustard-seed. It may grow with the growth and strengthen with the strength of the baptized person; but its growth may be impeded with the vices of youth, and it may be choked with the wickedness of manhood. And yet that person's condition in the future state may be better for this pious act of his parents, than if he had never been baptized. The rite of confirmation, and the other sacrament, especially the latter, which is to be frequently repeated, are renewals by repentance of this first sacrament, and give it all the freshness and efficacy which are ascribed to it when administered to the adult. And since baptism is the opening of the door of grace to the soul, the admission into the church, the ark of salvation, and the washing away of the inherent corruption of Adam's fall, the sooner children have the benefit of it, the better.

“What is the sacrament of the Lord's Supper?”

It is an act of faith manifested in obedience. It was instituted by our Saviour to supply the place of the typical sacrifice, as soon as he, the real sacrifice, should be offered, and his ascension completed; that he might eat with his disciples, and thus communicate with them in his Father's kingdom. It, as he bowed down his soul unto death, implies in us a bowing down of all self before God; a tearing of pride from the heart; a nailing of our carnal affections on the cross. It is the renewing of our hope in the life to come, and an exercise of our charity by meeting together in Christ in the mutual benevolence of the glorified state. And, lastly, it is a giving of thanks for all we enjoy, and especially for redemption; and therefore is sometimes called, though very improperly, the *Eucharist*.

5. "What do you mean by the Holy Ghost?"
The third person of the Trinity as already spoken of.

"What is his office?"

At the creation of the world, he is represented as moving or brooding on the face of the chaotic waters; and as human nature has ever since the fall of man been in a ruinous or chaotic state, he has, in like manner, brooded over it, to raise each individual from the ruins, and bring him to God.

“ What do you mean by the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit ? ”

The same as by the indwelling of the Spirit, or the heart being the temple of the Holy Ghost. As he is the same spirit that breathed into man at the creation the breath of life, so, when he inspires or breathes afresh to strengthen the spirit and understanding of man with respect to heavenly things, he may be said either to impart divine strength or gifts and graces, or to remain and dwell therein.

“ What do you mean by the spiritual influence of the devil ? ”

The devil we suppose a created being ; and undoubtedly created by the same Spirit which breathed into man the breath of life when man became a living soul. We suppose the devil of superior intelligence to man ; but still, though more deeply fallen, he must in his original nature be as nearly allied to God as man is, equally God’s offspring. He may be of such a kindred nature with man’s spirit, as that he may blend or associate with it so as to hide his real presence, but at the same time infuse a mistiness over the heavenly ray, and promote a love or desirableness of sensual and earthly things.

“ You before called this the empire of the devil : define his power a little more.”

When the devil prevailed over Adam, he got possession of the fountain of the will, and caused man to indulge an enmity against God. It is here he reigns and pushes man on to iniquity, by inciting the instincts with the desirableness of the objects of gratification. Christ's victory over him shook him in this the seat of his empire; and the Holy Ghost now so far restrains him, that man's will has fair play. If, notwithstanding this, the human will is still in favour of sensual delights, the devil prevails. If, on the contrary, it leans to virtue and religion, the Holy Spirit assists to such a degree, that the man attains salvation. Christ is the author of this salvation; but still, as in the former case man is said to cause his own ruin, so in the latter he is represented as working out his own salvation. But unfortunately, though the Spirit sometimes succeeds so far as to partly open the eyes to the real condition of the soul; and the light of reason makes out the true historical state of the case from the written word of God; yet, before this has been discovered, the soul has tasted of the guilty pleasures of the world. The love of them has taken root in the affections, and the adversary leaves no room for the love of God. The understanding is enlightened, but the heart is unaffected. All that the Saviour has done and suffered is but a dead letter; a piece of edifying history in the economy of this world; but it speaks not through the conscience, because the foe has

made a lodgment there and blocks up the avenue. The Holy Spirit calls and knocks, and obtains some faint answers and short and feeble compliances; but the Tempter has the fountain of the will, and entices compliances with full purpose of heart, and with all the vigour of the soul. But, on the contrary, whenever the Holy Ghost finds an inclination of the will, he strengthens that. And however small the power of the freedom of the will may be, it is all-powerful when it has Omnipotence on its side.

“ To what degree are we sensible of this internal conflict ? ”

It all seems the operation of our own minds, for the Tempter’s art is to conceal his presence; and the probation to which God subjects man requires that the balance between faith and free-agency should not be destroyed by any overpowering or sensible spiritual influence. That this is possible, is evident when we remember that the same Holy Spirit which influences, is the same as breathed the breath of life.

“ How are we best to obtain the gifts of the Holy Spirit ? ”

By prayer; for prayer is a forcible bending of the will to the Spirit; a rending of pride and carnal affections from the soul; so, as it were, to make room in it, and enlarge it for new accessions;

while negligence of this imperative duty in a Christian's life, and sensual pursuits, choke it up, and finally shut the avenues of the Spirit's approach.

6. "What have you to say of the freedom of the will and predestination?"

When a man is deeply involved in a sinful course, to talk of turning to God by prayer and repentance of his own strength, would be like attempting to stop himself in the midst of his descent in leaping from a precipice. And as to predestination, in the Calvinistic sense, it altogether contradicts the whole of the divine economy of this world, the divine justice, mercy, and righteousness, and is entirely without other foundation than the *instinct* of self-supremacy.

"When and how did the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination originate?"

It first appeared in the family of Ham, immediately after the Deluge, chiefly in the line of Cush. Then it was they began to call themselves the heaven-born, the sons of God, the chosen seed, and so forth, in opposition to the rest of Noah's posterity, whom they represented as earth-born, plebeian, and reprobate. And it has prevailed among mankind ever since, under various forms. But it is best known to us in the doctrines of Calvin; for when, at the Reformation, men began

to shake off the trammels of the Popish priesthood, they arrogated to themselves this distinction, on which the priestly power was originally founded.

“ What effect has this unbridled spirit of self-supremacy had on the destinies of mankind ? ”

It has been a powerful instrument in the divine hand for modelling the human race. Among the heathens, according to Mr. Faber, the party have been the corrupters, civilizers, and enslavers of mankind. And among Christians, they have performed such exploits as the pure spirit of Christianity would have shrunk from. To our Saxon ancestors, the supposed Cushite race, we owe this spirit, which animated the Puritanical reformers of our free and happy constitution. So that the Calvinistic spirit is perhaps only the manifestation of the true Saxon blood, of which Britons have good cause to be proud. A Calvinist persuading himself that he is a chosen vessel of God, is the one, as going forth in the strength of the Lord God, who will resist the most violent temptations, bear up against the laugh and sneers of dissolute companions, and will make the greatest sacrifice of worldly interest to the glory of God, counting all things but loss so that he gain Christ.

7. “ What do you understand by the general judgment ? ”

It is to the Creator what the gathering in of the harvest is to the husbandmen. As the latter collects the different kinds of grain to their various purposes, so the former will gather together all this world's population, the living and the dead ; when each will receive according to his works, in that station assigned him by his Creator and Redeemer, who is now become his Judge.

" How do you suppose the dead will be assembled before God ? "

As the Lord God created this world from nothing, and breathed into man the breath of life, he will command the matter of this world to assume a form that shall best suit his purpose, or to entirely disappear to nothing, whence it was created, and every soul to stand naked before him.

" What do you mean by God's book being opened, and men's deeds found therein recorded ? "

Probably this book of God's remembrance will be each person's own soul and body in precisely that condition in which his whole life of virtue and vice has placed them, so that every one's own conscience will be his judge, when he stands revealed before the divine glory.

" How do you suppose the judgment will proceed ? "

Jesus Christ will come in the divine power and glory, but yet in or with his human nature, in which nature he experienced all the temptations of this world. His human nature, in its glory, will be the standard, the mirror of justice, by which the spiritual condition of each individual of this world's mighty population will be compared, decided, and made as manifest as the splendour of divine justice and self-conviction can make it. The true Christian, clothed in the imputed righteousness of the Redeemer, will appear as an angel of light, in perfect health and beauty, and in all the perfection of the divine image restored upon him. While the hardened impenitent may be all emaciation, ugliness, and darkness. The one all splendid as the diamond, the other all black as charcoal, the same, but unpurified substance.

8. "What have you to say of the future state?"

It is in the future state where God is truly God; for in this world we see little of him. We walk by faith. In the intermediate state our view of him will be imperfect. But in the future state we shall see him face to face, as we now enjoy the blessed light of the sun.

"What kind of a body shall we then have?"

It does not yet appear. But undoubtedly one as well adapted to its purpose as the one we now have is adapted to all the purposes of this life; and

one which we shall equally with our present body consider as a part of ourselves.

"What change do you suppose there will be in our faculties?"

When a child is born into this world, faculties are brought into use, which no one would have dreamt of by merely contemplating it in its former condition. The soul, through every period of this life, sleeping and awake, has all the muscles of the animal machine to keep in play. But should it in the next world have a body not needing this instrumental exertion, there will be a greater host of faculties at liberty for the purposes of the next world, than there was in the new-born babe for the purposes peculiar to the animal and intellectual instrumentality of this life.

"What do you suppose these purposes may be?"

This we know very little of. But judging from analogy, and the constant activity of the soul in this world, we cannot suppose it to be a scene of listless indifference. That God is equal to placing us in scenes suited to every degree of spiritual attainment far beyond our present imagination for action and pathos, is evident enough; and yet, both our entrance upon that existence, and everything in it, may seem as natural to us, as any cir-

cumstance in this world to the present state of our faculties.

9. "What have you to say of the unfulfilled prophecies respecting this world's history, and especially of the Book of the Revelation of St. John the Divine?"

In Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the image and empire of the stone, we are assured that the Christian religion, in defiance of all opposition from the devil in the garb of infidelity, will become universal. But the evidence, more than what the light of history affords, will never be stronger than at present with us, nor will the world be any less a vale of tears and a furnace of affliction. No prophecy, however, is of private interpretation. I can discover no ground for the peculiar history of any one particular nation being foretold; and even in the Book of the Revelation, the storehouse of all would-be prophets, I see no prophecies but what apply to the great plan of salvation as unique with this world's history.

"What is your opinion of the imagery of the Book of Revelations?"

That as the sacred mysteries of the heathen priesthood were the strong hold of idolatry, this Book of Revelations was purposely given as a representation of realities; in opposition to their

mysteries, the representation of only supposed realities and mere vanities. It was a divine blow at the whole fabric of idolatry ; and like all the divine acts, it was decisive. It swept the mysteries away as completely as if they had never been. But vain men, ignorant of this important fact, suppose they have in these divine revelations the outlines of the history of their own times. They discover in them meanings never meant. But as every individual part of this world's history is in the analogy of the whole, no doubt shadows of detached parts may be discovered in each individual part, which leads to the supposition, along with the instinct of supremacy, whose tendency is to give supreme importance to the events of every one's own age—that all the revolutionary events of this world's history are therein prefigured.

“ In what respect then does this said book regard us now, when these mysteries are swept away ? ”

It is a true picture of the Almighty's procedure in this world's history. It is a lifting of the veil of Divine Providence ; permitting the faithful in every age to view what is going on behind the scene ; and yet is so contrived, like all the rest of scripture, the unveiling of Divine Providence, as to be a mere blank to the infidel. To him all appears as if there was neither providence nor hereafter. Sin is a veil upon his heart. And he asks the old atheistical question, ‘ Where is the promise of his

coming, for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the creation of the world? Since Christianity was first promulgated, and miracles ceased, where,' says he, 'is the proof that God cares any further about it.' This Book of the Revelation teaches us far otherwise. It shows us that Christianity is as much, now, in the hands of God and Christ, and that its affairs are as duly administered by the Holy Spirit, as when Christ himself was in the act of working miracles upon earth ;—that the work proceeds according to the divine plan, and will in due time be brought to a conclusion. This great drama in due order is approaching its final catastrophe :—not that a new system may rise out of its ruins, but its ruins will beimmerged in a new and infinitely more glorious order of things !

CONCLUSION.

FROM the above sketch of the Natural History of Religion, it is evident that man in this world, in this first step of his existence, must undergo a discipline of appetites, by being placed, for a certain season, where these appetites cannot be satiated, but yet where there are objects that hold out a promise of gratification. The urgency to snatch at these is to be resisted: this is the jet of his discipline. After such a probation, if successfully terminated, he is to be removed to a more exalted station, where there will not be this pupillage or necessary vigilance and self-control, but where there will be full gratification of his most unlimited desires.

Had man continued in his first condition in Paradise, and not fallen, he would have attained to future glory of his own strength and merit. He would, as to his freedom of will, have been the author of his own glory. But as he fell, should he gain heaven, he must be content to owe the glory of it to the merits of Another. He must be stripped of pride; of all whereof he may glory. Pride is the vice of his nature, the consequence of his fall. To root it out from his heart is the sum

and substance of religious discipline ; which, while the love of sin remains, is the most irksome and difficult task in the world. The spiritual history of man is all in all an account of the struggle with this self-exaltation against God. Every religious error and every superstitious device, arose from a wish to be on good terms with the Supreme Being, and yet avoid this ungrateful task, which, to a worldly-minded man, is compared to plucking out the right eye or cutting off the right hand.

Under the mild spirit of a government established on truly religious principles, the task is still more difficult than in the midst of tyranny and affliction. But it may be observed that God relaxes his discipline, and tempers the duty in some degree to external circumstances : at least, this was the case till the fulness of revelation was vouchsafed. In the Jewish dispensation were allowances for the hardness of their hearts, such as the permission of revenge. But Christianity makes no allowance. It does not so much lay down a system of morals as a discipline for the heart ; the natural result of which is supposed to be such a system of morals as will be completed in the blissful state. It is to be the spiritual light of man to the end of the world : to witness to him what a system of morals he is disciplined for. Nor is it the only light, though the only true religion. Every man has a light within him, his own conscience. And by this will he be judged in the

last day ; for then it will be found, that the will of God is written therein, as well as in his revealed word, in the holy Scriptures. If men cannot receive the light of the gospel as a guide of life, it is because their institutions and old established customs are too strong. Their conscience tells them it is the true light, but their lusts require a hotter furnace of affliction than can be under the mild form of Christian government. Hence are permitted such dispensations as Mohammedism, Popery, and the Greek Church, which are but half Christian and half Pagan.

Mohammed laid claim to nothing higher than the Prophet of God ; ranking himself with Moses and Jesus Christ, whom he considered as a mere prophet. He asserted that, as Moses spake of Christ as the prophet whom God would raise up like unto himself, so Christ spoke of him (Mohammed) as the Comforter, with a further description which the Christians through perverseness deleted from the Gospel of John.

In the life of Mohammed are several circumstances that would almost induce one to give credit to the divine communications to which he laid claim. But if we deduct what he might be assisted in by secret agents, and the colourings and forgeries of his too partial historians, his own followers, we shall readily enough join with all Christian writers in the conclusion that he had no assistance from divine inspiration. But after this

is said of him, we must allow that he was the most extraordinary man the world ever saw. We act very preposterously, and do him great wrong, when we view him through the light of Christianity. We ought to inquire what the state of mankind would have been without him. The Gospel had been preached among all the nations of Western Asia; but in his time, the beginning of the seventh century, it was all absorbed in idolatry. All that part of the earth was overrun by independent tribes in the very darkest heathenism. The grand Enemy of mankind might be said to urge them, in their religious rites, to every species of idolatrous abomination inimical to the well-being of the human race. Mohammed put a stop to human victims in sacrifice; he prohibited infanticide, practised when the parents were too poor to bring up their children; he restrained promiscuous concubinage; forbade drunkenness and murder; and whatever he left bad in his religion was in the place of something much worse.

Should we compare the people of the east, among whom Mohammedism spread, with those of the west, who received popery and the doctrines of the Greek Church, we shall perhaps find that Mohammedism worked as great a reform as these nominally Christian systems. The people of the west were a moral people in comparison of those of the east. And since man is such a being as to be worked on rather by affliction than by the be-

nignant light of the gospel, we must not expect that Christianity will ever so far prevail as to eradicate selfishness from the soul of man. He never will be governed by the law which commands him to do in all respects to others what he would have others do to him. Mohammed's followers with their armies overran many of the nominally Christian states. But if we examine the religion of these states, we shall find it a system of Polytheism and image worship. At this time Christianity had been some centuries the established religion. The declaration of Constantine in its favour produced a change that bore some resemblance to it, so far as the name of things went: but it did not expel the spirit of darkness from his strong hold in the souls of men. The men in power changed with considerable facility their religion, and kept their places; and very soon boasted of their Polytheism in saints, equal to the Gods of the Pagan system. Christianity, therefore, soon became such a medley, as was more insulting to the Deity than ancient Paganism. It is not, however, here pretended that these churches were overturned by Mohammed's followers, that a more pure religion might be established by them; but that they were merely blotted out by this divine dispensation.

Perhaps Protestants are accustomed to view both Mohammedism and Popery in a false light. They

rail against the usurpations and corruptions of the latter, while both systems they must allow were permitted by the Almighty ; and what He permits is for the best. While Mohammedism destroyed idolatry in the east, the Pope's supremacy in the west put an end to the impious contentions of the ambitious prelates, all aiming at even more than sovereign power. His assumed infallibility quashed the endless hostility about trifling absurdities and useless points of doctrine. Popery did not so much broach the corruptions of Christianity, as continue them. Taking advantage of those which favoured the tyranny of the priesthood, it knit the priests firmly in one body. They, by an occasional self-infliction of suffering, and an innate insensibility to all the softer affections of the heart, like that which distinguished the ancient Romans, and with a diabolical subtlety, succeeded in the end in prostrating the minds of men and in subjugating the European nations. But still the foundation of most of their tyranny had been laid ; and of the rest it perhaps redounded to the good of mankind. If priests were prohibited marriage, a notion prevailed that men who had wives were much more liable than others to fall under the influence of malicious demons. If they usurped power over men's conscience, it was when murder and every other crime were tolerated, or laws were so lax that they could not be punished. While they who

exclaimed the most against the usurpation of the bishop of Rome were those whose ambition was thereby checked.

However contrary to the spirit of Christianity may be the pride and tyranny of the pope, they had a salutary restraint upon mankind. War was then the general trade. The inhabitants of Europe were bands of lawless plunderers. Kings were licensed robbers. Popery brought them into subjection. A proud chieftain would tremble before a priest and become subject to law, who would not, according to our present church discipline, have relented. In the end all western Europe was subjugated under one head; and men were thus taught to obey governors. But at the same time that wicked and ambitious men were thus made the instruments of subjugating each other, God left not himself without witness. The church was in the wilderness persecuted by this said antichrist. The Albigenses, the Hugonots, and other denominations, never ceased from the earth from the time of the apostles, till they were all merged in the general name of Protestants. Here was the true church waiting till the tyranny of popery disciplined men into more steady and peaceable designs; and then, when it began to fasten chains upon the human intellect, by dispensations, and continuing to retain the sacred scriptures, the two witnesses in sackcloth, shut up from the people,

the church enlarged its bounds by the labours of Wickliffe, Luther, and other reformers.

We clamour now, and very justly, against popery, for striving to revive and maintain its system of spiritual tyranny adapted only to the midnight darkness of ignorance, while the luminary of knowledge is already above our horizon : but we forget that the present state of man, as respects his probation, is a system of suffering. This was entailed on him by the Fall. All such passages in the Old Testament as speak of beating swords into ploughshares, and of men learning war no more, are to be interpreted of the natural result of the Christian doctrine, if men would be influenced by it; and of its effects in bringing them to rest and peace in the future state. But men love sin too well cordially to embrace the self-denying doctrines of Christ; and should Popery be no longer the strong hold of antichrist ; should he from this citadel no longer be able to blow up the fire in the furnace of affliction ; he will still be allowed by the Almighty to tempt every man ; will still be permitted to work the Almighty's will in sounding the depths of every heart, and sifting as wheat the motives of every action. We need not therefore expect popery to fall till another system as hostile to Christianity is erected. This is not Satan divided against himself, but a mere change of ground for his own advantage. Popery is now fast giving

way; but it is not before the spirit of Christianity, so much as before its new opponent *Infidelity*. And this will, in all probability, raise as terrific a front against all true believers as popery ever did; and kingdoms may be as firmly knit together under it as they have been under the older antichristian forms of popery and paganism.

We have long been in the habit of considering Christianity as too pure for the minds of certain nations. As if the Author of it was not also the Creator of the heart of man. "The Lord looketh down from heaven, he beholdeth all the sons of men: from the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth: he fashioneth their hearts alike." Our error, in a great measure, proceeds from our considering the savage mind as a blank with respect to religion; whereas nothing is more fallacious. Religion is so natural to man, that nothing has so great an effect in driving it from the heart as worldly success. The professed infidel is more annoyed with the intrusive thoughts of it than any other man. The savage, the idolater, or the undefinable Chinese, is as anxious about it as the Briton. His light may be bad; but he is perhaps on that account so much the less at ease. Could the Gospel truths be so presented as not to shock his prejudice, they are so congenial with the soul, that they would be no sooner presented than recognized and embraced. And perhaps the time is not far distant, when the

heathens may be made to comprehend, that when they offer their sacrifices, they are offering a type of a suffering Saviour ; that when they consign their child to the flames, it is no less a proof of the soul's dread of the heinous nature of sin than a lively representation of the suffering of one still more dear to all the human race than that child to themselves. And if we, in possession of better knowledge, are bound in the hope of salvation to banish sin from the heart ; so are we bound by every precept of our most holy religion, to keep our Saviour's last command, " Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things which I have commanded you ; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

THE END.







